·THROUGH·THE·YEAR·WITH·THE·POETS·

·EDITED·BY·
·OSCAR·FAY·ADAMS·

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Through the Year with the Poets

EDITED BY

OSCAR FAY ADAMS.

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OCTOBER

EDITED BY

OSCAR FAY ADAMS

SHORTER and shorter now the twilight clips
  The days, as through the sunset gate they crowd,
And summer from her golden collar slips
  And strays through stubblefields, and moans aloud,
Save when by fits the warmer air deceives,
  And, stealing hopeful to some sheltered bower,
She lies on pillows of the faded leaves,
  And tries the old tunes over for an hour.

ALICE CARY.

Autumn.

BOSTON
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FRANKLIN AND HAWLEY STREETS

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PREFACE.

OCTOBER, like June, has found its lyrists mainly among modern poets. The majority of these later bards, it will be noticed, are American rather than English, but the reason for this is not far to seek. The English October is a sober-paced matron, by no means prodigal of color in her attire, but robed in reddish-brown, and possessing no characteristics calling for enthusiastic admiration. The American October is a very different personage, alternately seen with summer's smiles and winter's frowns. She has little liking for neutral tints, and spills the contents of her color-box recklessly over the forests, till they blaze with the hues she loves. The verses she inspires are, therefore, not only fuller of the season's delight than those which celebrate her English counterpart, but they come more spontaneously and abundantly.

Mr. Thomas Stephens Collier contributes to this volume a fine quatrain called "October," and Mr. Eben Eugene Rexford a musical poem entitled "In October." Another original contribution is "The Potato Harvest," by Mr. Charles G. D.

Roberts, one of the foremost of Canadian poets, which has a Millet-like suggestiveness and clearness of outline.

The thanks of the publishers are again due to the various owners of copyrights who have so courteously permitted the use of the poems thus held.

NANTASKET, MASS., September 8, 1886.

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OCTOBER.

OCTOBER.

Bending above the spicy woods which blaze,
Arch skies so blue they flash, and hold the sun
Immeasurably far; the waters run
Too slow, so freighted are the riverways
With gold of elm and birches from the maze
Of forests. Chestnuts, clicking one by one,
Escape from satin burrs; her fringes done,
The gentian spreads them out in sunny days,
And, like late revelers at dawn, the chance
Of one sweet, mad, last hour, all things assail,
And conquering, flush and spin; while, to enhance
The spell, by sunset door, wrapped in a veil
Of red and purple mists, the summer, pale,
Steals back alone for one more song and dance.

MRS. HELEN MARIA [FISKE] [HUNT] JACKSON.

OCTOBER.

THE TURNING OF THE LEAFE.

O HAPPY leafe
(I to the vernal bud did say),
Thou hast no griefe,
Kissed by the loving sunne in May.

Me envy not
(The leafe replied),
As sweet thy lot
All summertide.

O piteous leafe
(I to wild autumn's waife did say),
Thy pride how briefe,
How soone the frost and wind make way

Me pity not
(The leafe replied),
As vexed thy lot,
As briefe thy pride.

EDITH MATILDA THOMAS.

A STILL DAY IN AUTUMN.

I LOVE to wander through the woodlands hoary,
  In the soft gloom of an autumnal day,
When summer gathers up her robes of glory,
  And, like a dream of beauty, glides away.

How through each loved, familiar path she lingers,
  Serenely smiling through the golden mist,
Tinting the wild grape with her dewy fingers,
  Till the cool emerald turns to amethyst,

Kindling the faint stars of the hazel, shining
  To light the gloom of autumn's moldering halls,
With hoary plume the clematis entwining,
  Where, o'er the rock, her withered garland falls.

Warm lights are on the sleepy uplands waning
  Beneath dark clouds along the horizon rolled,
Till the slant sunbeams through their fringes raining,
  Bathe all the hills in melancholy gold.

The moist winds breathe of crispèd leaves and flowers,
  In the damp hollows of the woodland sown,
Mingling the freshness of autumnal showers
  With spicy airs from cedarn alleys blown.

Beside the brook and on the umbered meadow,
  Where yellow ferntufts fleck the faded ground,
With folded lids, beneath their palmy shadow,
  The gentian nods, in dewy slumbers bound.

Upon those soft, fringed lids the bee sits brooding,
  Like a fond lover loth to say farewell,
Or with shut wings, through silken folds intruding,
  Creeps near her heart his drowsy tale to tell.

The little birds upon the hillside lonely,
  Flit noiselessly along from spray to spray,
Silent as a sweet, wandering thought, that only
  Shows its bright wings, and softly glides away.

The scentless flowers, in the warm sunlight dreaming,
  Forget to breathe their fulness of delight,
And through the trancèd woods soft airs are streaming,
  Still as the dewfall of the summer night.

So, in my heart, a sweet, unwonted feeling
  Stirs, like the wind in ocean's hollow shell,
Through all its secret chambers sadly stealing,
  Yet finds no word its mystic charm to tell.

MRS. SARAH HELEN [POWER] WHITMAN.

THE CRICKET TO OCTOBER.

THE long, pure light, that brings
  To earth her perfect crown of bliss,
Wanes slow, — the thoughtful drooping of the grain,
And the faint breath of the earth-loving things
  Say this.

Oft when the dews at night
  Clasp the cool shadows, all in vain,
I look along the meadows, level, dark,
To see the firefly lift her tender light
  Again.

From the thick-woven shade,
  Where, on the red-cupped moss, to-day,
A crimson ray alit, the bluebird sends
One melancholy note up the brown glade,
  This way.

Last night, I saw an eft
  Crawl to the worm's forsaken bier,
To die there, as I think, — beetle nor bee,
Nor the ephemera's ethereal weft.
  Sport here.

Yet great has been life's zest.
  Almost how the grass grows, I know,
And the ant sleeps; the busy summer long,
I have kept the secret of the ground-bird's nest
  Below.

But sweeter my employ
  In some still hours. I seem to live
Too near the beating of earth's mighty heart,
Not to have learned in part how she can joy
  And grieve!

'Twas on a night last June,
  Into the clear, bold sky,
The little stars stole each with separate thrill,
And the mossed fir-top woke its mystic rune
  Close by.

Upon yon westering slope,
  Two glorious human shapes there stood,
Rosy with twilight, listening to my song:
I knew I sang to them of love and hope,
  Life's good.

The little stars' soft rays
  Again thrill through their realm of peace;
One shadow haunts the slope; — a song I sing
To match the broken music of her days,
  Then cease.

ANNE WHITNEY.

OCTOBER.

My ornaments are fruits; my garments leaves,
  Woven like cloth-of-gold and crimson-dyed;
I do not boast the harvestings of sheaves,
  O'er orchards and o'er vineyards I preside.
  Though on the frigid Scorpion I ride,
The dreamy air is full, and overflows
  With tender memories of the summertide,
And mingled voices of the doves and crows.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.
The Poets' Calendar.

OCTOBER.

"Rest! Rest! Shall I not have all eternity to rest in?" ARNAULD.

THERE comes a time of rest to thee,
Whose laden boughs droop heavily
Toward earth, thou golden-fruited tree!

A time when wind and tempest cease
To spoil and stain thy fair increase:
After fruition deepest peace.

The tender bloom that decked thee, bride,
The jewels of thy matron pride,
And purple robes, — all laid aside.

The slow, red sunshine, o'er thee cast,
In sweet, sad kisses for thy last,
And shadow-haunted from the past.

Green, leafy, quiet, freed from care,
No heavier weight thy lithe limbs bear
Than dripping rain and sunny air.

But unto man's diviner sense
The strenuous rest of penitence
Remaineth only for defence.

His fruit drops slowly from his hands,
But only with the dropping sands
That fall on Time's slow-gathering strands.

The sower in this mortal field
Shall reap no harvests' gracious yield,
The warrior conquest, — on his shield.

But after life and fruit and rest,
Thou, tree! by dust shall be possessed;
To him remains a day more blest,

A newer hope, a sunnier time
Renewed forever in its prime,
Where God, his harvest, sits sublime.

MRS. ROSE [TERRY] COOKE.

AN AUTUMN LANDSCAPE.

A KNOLL of upland, shorn by nibbling sheep
To a rich carpet, woven of short grass
And tiny clover, upward leads my steps
By the seamed pathway, and my roving eye
Drinks in the vassal landscape. Far and wide
Nature is smiling in her loveliness.
Masses of woods, green strips of fields, ravines
Shown by their outlines drawn against the hills,
Chimneys and roofs, trees single and in groups,
Bright curves of brooks, and vanishing mountain tops
Expand upon my sight. October's brush
The scene has colored; not with those broad hues
Mixed in his later palette by the frost,
And dashed upon the picture till the eye
Aches with the varied splendor, but in tints
Left by light scattered touches. Overhead
There is a blending of cloud, haze, and sky;
A silvery sheet with spaces of soft blue;
A trembling veil of gauze is stretched athwart
The shadowy hillside and dark forest-flanks;
A soothing quiet broods upon the air,
And the faint sunshine winks with drowsiness.
Far sounds melt mellow on the ear: the bark —
The bleat — the tinkle — whistle — blast of horn —
The rattle of the wagonwheel — the low —
The fowler's shot — the twitter of the bird,

And e'en the hum of converse from the road.
The grass, with its low insect-tones, appears
As murmuring in its sleep. This butterfly
Seems as if loth to stir, so lazily
It flutters by. In fitful starts and stops
The locust sings. The grasshopper breaks out
In brief harsh strains amidst its pausing chirps;
The beetle, glistening in its sable mail,
Slow climbs the clovertops, and e'en the ant
Darts round less eagerly.

ALFRED BILLINGS STREET.

OCTOBER.

THEN came October full of merry glee;
For yet his noul was totty of the must,
Which he was treading in the wine-fats see,
And of the joyous oil, whose gentle gust
Made him so frolic and so full of lust:
Upon a dreadful Scorpion he did ride,
The same which by Diana's doom unjust
Slew great Orion; and eke by his side
He had his plowing share and coulter ready tied.

EDMUND SPENSER.
The Faerie Queene.

OCTOBER.

She stands upon the silent hills,
  A tender sorrow in her eyes,
As one whose heart at parting thrills
  With summer's sunniest memories;
While, waking from her tearful gloom,
  With cheeks on fire and eyes aflame,
All nature blushes into bloom
  At sound of her beloved name.

The wild woods weave their brightest spells,
  To gem the splendor of her hair;
The wild winds swing their sweetest bells,
  And die with all their music there;
The banners of her pride unfurled
  Float on the breezes faintly sweet,
And, empress of a conquered world,
  She sees its trophies at her feet.

Back to the world she woos the light
  That died as summer's smile expires;
And all the fading woods grow bright
  With flashes from her altar fires;
Yet crowned and pale she walks apart,
  Lips moving in a mute caress,
And folds above her throbbing heart
  The mantle of her loneliness.

As sometime when the bloom has fled,
  The light that marked our summer gone,
When spring's best hopes are ripe or dead
  And life's pale winter hurrying on, —
We stand at eventide aside,
  Wearing the robes we hoped to win,
And fold our lives in piteous pride,
  All fair without, all scarred within.

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH [MCGRATH] BLAKE.

THE FIRST WEEK IN OCTOBER.

ONCE on an autumn day as I reposed
  Beneath a noonbeam, pallid yet not dull,
  The branch above my head dipt itself full
Of that white sunshine momently, and closed;
While, ever and anon, the ashen keys
  Dropt down beside the tarnished hollyhocks,
  The scarlet cranesbill, and the faded stocks,
Flung from the shuffling leafage by the breeze.
How wistfully I marked the year's decay,
  Forecasting all the dreary wind and rain;
  'Twas the last week the swallow would remain.
How jealously I watched his circling play!
A few brief hours, and he would dart away,
  No more to turn upon himself again.

CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER.

A CUP OF NATURE.

THE autumn's a gorgeous golden cup,
  With a warm, empurpled rim;
The sunset lavishly fills it up
  With rosy wine to the brim.

And while the wind so wearily grieves
  Through the grasses parched and dead,
It spills the wine on the trembling leaves
  And turns them yellow and red.

RICHARD KENDALL MUNKITTRICK.

OCTOBER.

OH, loosely swings the purpling vine,
  The yellow maples flame before,
The golden-tawny ash trees stand
  Hard by our cottage door;
October glows on every cheek,
  October shines in every eye,
While up the hill and down the dale
  Her crimson banners fly.

ELAINE GOODALE.
In the Century Magazine.

CHANT FOR AUTUMN.

VEILED in visionary haze,
Behold the ethereal autumn days
Draw near again!
In broad array,
With a low, laborious hum
These ministers of plenty come,
That seem to linger, while they steal away.

O strange, sweet charm
Of peaceful pain,
When yonder mountain's bended arm
Seems wafting o'er the harvest-plain
A message to the heart that grieves,
And round us, here, a sad-hued rain
Of leaves that loosen without number
Showering falls in yellow, umber,
Red or russet, 'thwart the stream!
Now pale Sorrow shall encumber
All too soon these lands, I deem;
Yet who at heart believes
The autumn, a false friend,
Can bring us fatal harm?
Ah, mist-hung avenues, in dream
Not more uncertainly extend
Than the season that receives
A summer's latest gleam!

But the days of death advance:
They tarry not, nor turn!
I will gather the ashes of summer
In my heart, as an urn.

O draw thou nearer,
Thou
Spirit of the distant height,
Whither now that slender flight
Of swallows, winging, guides my sight.
The hill doth seem to me
A fading memory
Of long delight,
And in its distant blue
Half hideth from my view
This shrinking season that must now retire;
And so shall hold it, hopeful, a desire
And knowledge old as night and always new.
Draw nigher! And, with bended brow,
I will be thy reverer
Through the long winter's term!

So, when the snows hold firm,
And the brook is dumb;
When sharp winds come
To flay the hilltops bleak,
And whistle down the creek;
While the unhappy worm
Crawls deeper down into the ground,
To 'scape Frost's jailer on his round;

Thy form to me shall speak
From the wide valley's bound,
Recall the waving of the last bird's wing,
And help me hope for spring.

GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

OCTOBER.

THE days are still, and the long nights hushed,
And the far sky burns like the heart of a rose;
And the woods, with the gold of autumn flushed,
Lavish their splendor in crimson snows.

The quail pipes shrilly, the robin sings
A sweet, low song of a southern world
At early morn, when in delicate rings
The mists from the marshes are upward curled.

The schoolboys shout on the windy hill,
Where nuts lie thick in the matted grass;
And the maidens, who trip by the moss-grown mill,
Sweetly sing as they lightly pass.

The world is caught in a wonderful net
Of beautiful, tremulous-golden haze,
And is laid asleep to dream and forget
That winter cometh and stormy days.

CHARLES TURNER DAZEY.

"AUTUMNA."

A BOLD brunette she is, radiant with mirth,
  Who comes a-tripping over cornfields cropped;
  Fruits, flowers, and full ears, from her garland dropped,
Carpet her feet along the gladdened earth;

For round her brow glitters a careless crown
  Of bronzèd oak, and apple leaves, and vine;
  And russet nuts and country berries twine
About her gleaming shoulders and loose gown.

Like grape at vintage, when its ripe blood glows,
  Glows so her sweet cheek, summer-touched but fair,
  And like grape tendrils, all her wealth of hair,
Gold on a ground of brown, nods as she goes.

Grapes too, aspirt, her brimming fingers bear,
  A dainty winepress, pouring wet and warm
  The crimson river over wrist and arm;
And on her lips, — adding no crimson there!

Ah, golden autumn hours, fly not so fast!
  Let the glad lady long with us delay;
  The sunset makes the sun so wished-for, — stay!
Of three fair sisters, — loveliest and the last!

But after laughter ever follows grief,
  And pleasure's sunshine makes the shadow pain;
  Even now begins the dreary time again,
The first dull patter of the first dead leaf.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

AUTUMN EVENING.

AND now the western sun withdraws the day,
And humid evening, gliding o'er the sky,
In her chill progress, to the ground condensed,
The ascending vapor throws. Where waters ooze,
Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,
Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along
The dusky-mantled lawn. Meanwhile the moon,
Full-orbed, and breaking through the scattered clouds,
Shows her broad visage in the crimsoned east.

. . . . . .

Now, through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.
Wide the pale deluge floats; and streaming wild
O'er the skied mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.

JAMES THOMSON.
The Seasons.

AN AUTUMN MORNING.

O WHAT a morn is this for us who knew
  The large, blue, summer mornings, heaven let down
  Upon the earth for men to drink, the crown
Of perfect human living, when we grew
Great-hearted, like the gods! Come, we will strew
  White ashes on our hair, nor strive to drown
  In faint hymn to the year's fulfilled renown
The sterile grief which is the season's due.
Lightly above the vine-rows of rich hills,
  Where the brown peasant girls move amid grapes,
    The swallow glances; let him cry for glee!
But yon pale mist diffused 'twixt paler shapes,
  Once sovereign trees, my spirit also fills;
    And an east wind comes moaning from the sea.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

OCTOBER.

A BIRDNOTE sounding here and there,
  A bloom, where leaves are brown and sober,
Warm noons, and nights with frosty air,
  And loaded wagons say, — October.

THOMAS STEPHENS COLLIER.

OCTOBER.

THE passionate summer's dead! the sky's aglow
  With roseate flushes of matured desire.
The winds at eve are musical and low,
  As sweeping chords of a lamenting lyre,
  Far up among the pillared clouds of fire,
Whose pomp of strange procession upward rolls,
With gorgeous blazonry of pictured scrolls,
  To celebrate the summer's past renown;
  Ah, me! how regally the heavens look down
O'ershadowing beautiful autumnal woods,
  And harvestfields with hoarded increase brown,
And deep-toned majesty of golden floods,
  That raise their solemn dirges to the sky,
  To swell the purple pomp that floateth by.

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

KENTISH HEDGEROWS IN AUTUMN.

THROUGHOUT the world is there a scene more fair,
  After its kind, than Kentish hedgerows, seen
In autumn days, before a frosty air
  Has frolicked in and out their bowery green?
The wealth of gold and crimson shows as gay
  As summer flowers on the cornel's bough;

The high dark pine a crown with ruddy ray
  From woodbine's clustering berries weareth now.
Whilst bryony, with purpled heart-shaped leaves,
  From right to left contrariwise doth twine,
Laughing in glorious freedom as it wreathes
  And hangs gay bunches, which will glow and shine
For thee and me, my love, upon our wall,
Till springtime come, nor will one berry fall.

MRS. ELIZABETH MAYHEW [WALLER] EDMONDS.

AUTUMN.

THE softest shadows mantle o'er his form,
  And the curved sickle in his grasp appears,
  Glooming and brightening; while a wreath of ears
Circles his sallow brow, which the angry storm
  Gusts down at intervals; about him stray
The volant sweets of the trailing mignonette,
  And odors vague, that haunt the year's decay;
The crush of leaves is heard beneath his feet,
  Mixt, as he onward goes, with softer sound,
As though his heel was sinking into snows:
  Full soon a sadder landscape opens round,
With, here and there, a latter-flowering rose,
Child of the summer hours, though blooming here
Far down the vista of the fading year.

CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER.

OCTOBER IN THE HIGHLANDS.

(*After Keats.*)

OCTOBER, misty bright, the touch is thine
  That the full year to consummation brings,
When noonday suns and nightly frosts combine
  To make a glory that outrivals spring's;
The mountain bases swathed in russet fern,
  Their middle girths with deer-grass golden-pale,
And the high summits touched with earliest snows,
  From summer dreamings lift to thoughts more stern:
  Then doth the harvest moon in beauty sail
  O'er the far peaks and the mist-steaming vale,
While silver-sheened our household river flows.

Who hath not seen thee clambering up the crag,
  On sunny days in many-hued attire,
Making wild-cherry leaves thy scarlet flag,
  And kindling rowan boughs to crimson fire?
Sometimes on dizzy rock-ledge thou art seen,
  Even as an angel from heaven new-lit,
Quivering aloft in aspen's pallid gold;
  Or far up mountains queen-like thou dost sit,
  Cushioned on mosses orange, purple, green,
  Or down their bases homeward thou dost lean,
Loaded with withered ferns, a housewife old.

What though the summer mountain-fruits are gone,
  Though of black crowberries grouse have eat their fill?
A few belated cloudberries linger on,
  High on the moist hillbreast where mists distil;
And now the prickly juniper displays
  On dry warm banks his pungent fruitage blue.
Deep in pine forests whortleberries show
  Their box-like leaves and fruit of bright red hue,
  And old fail-dykes along the upland braes
  Fringed with blueberry leaves in scarlet blaze,
Add to October sunsets richer glow.

And for thy songs, home carting late-won peats,
  Crofters low-humming down hill-tracks return,
While here and there some lone ewe-mother bleats
  Fitfully, for last summer's lamb forlorn;
O'er heather brown no wild bee murmurs float,
  The peewits gone, shy curlews haste to leave
The high moors where they screamed the summer long,
  From slaughtering guns the mountains win reprieve,
  But still far up on mossy haggs remote
  The plover sits and pipes her plaintive note,
And cackling grousecock whirrs on pinions strong.

JOHN CAMPBELL SHAIRP.

THE WILD ROSE IN OCTOBER.

THOU last pale promise of the waning year,
Poor, sickly rose, what dost thou here?
Why, frail flower, so late a comer,
Hast thou slept away the summer?
Since now, in autumn's sullen reign,
When every breeze unrobes the trees,
And strews their annual garments on the plain,
Awaking from repose, thy fairy lids unclose.

. . . . . .

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

OCTOBER IN THE LOWLANDS.

THE russet's o'er the heather,
  The green grace of the bracken gone;
Sere and dun each moorland space,
  Where the gleam of summer shone.

The mist creeps o'er the height,
  The burn comes hoarser down;
The wandering wind is wailing
  Among the bent "sae brown."

The blaeberry leaf, blood-red,
  Flushes the face of the brae;
A crimson drop distilled
  From a deed in an olden fray.

The golden sheaves from the haugh
  Are born on the creaking wain;
Another year is upgathered,
  Ne'er to be mine again.

. . . .

JOHN VEITCH.

AN AUTUMN NIGHT IN ORKNEY.

SET low between green banks the long loch lies
  Gleaming across the shadowy northern night,
Its little rippling splashes, and the sighs
  Of winds among the reeds, where gleams of white
  Betray the sleeping swans, and cries that might
Be echoes of a water spirit's song,
  Come low and soft up through the dim soft light;
Far overhead the mallard's pinion strong
Rings through the deepening dusk the quivering air
    along.

Out on a wave-washed sandspit, to and fro
  A troop of curlews wander lazily,
Their whistle rises tremulous and low,
  Tender as starlight on a windless sea;
  Then all the waters touched to melody
Wake with strange calls of divers dumb by day;
  A startled plover, piping plaintively,
Speeds to the misty moorland far away,
And through the bending reeds coots dive in clumsy
    play.

In a wide rush-grown pool upon the sands,
  Like a dark soul that some forgotten crime
Has struck to hopeless gloom, a heron stands
  A silent shadow, grey and gaunt as time.
  From the long grasses, white as if with rime
Where the pale mists cling low along the shore,
  Clear bell-like notes burst in sweet sudden chime,
And over all earth's voices evermore
Roll the deep thunder tones of ocean's solemn roar.

DUNCAN JOHN ROBERTSON.

SONG.

THE feathers of the willow
Are half of them grown yellow
  Above the swelling stream;
And ragged are the bushes,
And rusty now the rushes,
  And wild the clouded gleam.

The thistle now is older,
His stalk begins to molder,
  His head is white as snow;
The branches all are barer,
The linnet's song is rarer,
  The robin pipeth now.

RICHARD WATSON DIXON.

OCTOBER.

October, belovèd of Bacchus!
  The glory and crown of the year!
We welcome thy coming with laughter
  And drink to thy glorious cheer.
Thou art sparkling with diamonds at morning,
  Thou art blazing with rubies at noon,
And the sunlight that kisses thy forehead
  Is bright with the sunlight of June.

We crown thee with gold, Queen October,
  We clothe thee with purple to-day;
But we leave King November the ermine
  To wear with his garments of grey.
The maples, brave knights of thy kingdom,
  The oak trees, thy counsellors strong,
Are gracefully spreading their mantles
  For the queen they have waited so long.

The gentians and asters, thy pages,
  Creep lovingly close to thy feet;
The pansies, thy maidens of honor,
  Lift faces all dewy and sweet.
Resplendent thy ladies in waiting
  Stand graciously near to thy side,
The cardinal flower in her beauty,
  The goldenrod stately with pride.

O thine is a wonderful kingdom,
  October, and thou art a queen
Fit to rival the glowing Egyptian
  In splendor and queenliest mien.
The frost-king, the Cæsar thou scornest,
  May conquer thy realm with his blast,
But thou in thy dying remainest
  A sovereign and queen to the last.

MRS. ABBIE FRANCES [FISKE] JUDD.

AUTUMNAL SONNET.

Now autumn's fire burns slowly along the woods,
  And day by day the dead leaves fall and melt,
And night by night the monitory blast
Wails in the keyhole, telling how it passed
O'er empty fields, or upland solitudes,
  Or grim wide wave; and now the power is felt
Of melancholy, tenderer in its moods
  Than any joy indulgent summer dealt.
Dear friends, together in the glimmering eve,
  Pensive and glad, with tones that recognize
  The soft invisible dew on each one's eyes,
It may be, somewhat thus we shall have leave
  To walk with memory, when distant lies
Poor earth, where we were wont to live and grieve.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

IN OCTOBER.

In hazy gold the hillside sleeps,
  The distance fades within the mist,
A cloud of lucid vapor creeps
  Along the lake's pale amethyst.

The sun is but a blur of light,
  The sky in ashy grey is lost;
But all the forest trees are bright,
  Brushed by the pinions of the frost.

I hear the clamor of the crow,
  The wild-ducks' far, discordant cry,
As swiftly out of sight they go,
  In wedges driving through the sky.

I know the sunshine of this hour,
  Warm as the glow of early May,
Will never wake the dying flower,
  Nor breathe a spirit through decay.

The scarlet leaves are doomed to fall,
  The lake shall stiffen at a breath,
The crow shall ring his dreary call
  Above December's waste of death.

And so, thou bird of southern flight,
  My soul is yearning for thy wings,
I dread the thoughts that come to light
  In gazing on the death of things.

Fain would I spread an airy plume
  For lands where endless summers reign,
And lose myself in tropic bloom,
  And never think of death again.

GEORGE HENRY BOKER.
The Book of the Dead.

THISTLE DOWN.

THROUGH summer's gradual death, how sweet a sight
  The flowering thistle's tardy gleam appears, —
  Her thorny boughs like intricate chandeliers
When lit for festival with soft, rosy light,
Yet closelier watching her, to left and right
  You see the odorous beauty that she rears
  Girt on all sides with countless emerald spears,
Eager the invading hand to pierce or smite.
But when the autumnal trees in ruin glow,
You meet her white ghost wandering to and fro
  Aërially upon the fitful blast,
As though the spirit of this proud blossom came
To haunt the world in expiatory shame,
  Repentant of her cold imperious past!

EDGAR FAWCETT.

A TIME OF PEACE.

GOLDEN leaves, and a golden day;
(*Lights are warm when the year is old;*)
Rushes whisper and branches sway,
Gossamer shines and drifts away,
And the empty fort is still and grey;
(*The river flows like a tide of gold.*)

Long ago from that dim hill crest
(*The year was young, and the lights were pale;*)
Brake the thunder that scared the rest
Out of the rich vale's languid breast,
Till day died faint in the clouded west;
(*But only the river tells the tale.*)

Golden rays are about your face,
(*Mellow lights are the old year's crown;*)
Come to the old war-haunted place;
Come with your spell of peace and grace
To the heart where strife has scarred its trace;
(*The river sings as the sun goes down.*

Golden ways are before our feet;
(*While the year wanes the rich light glows;*)
Life is stored with the garnered wheat,
All the bitter has turned to sweet,
After the battle the rest is meet!
(*The song goes on as the river flows.*)

SARAH DOUDNEY.

VENICE IN AUTUMN.

To this black shell-encrusted stake
  Girt with sea-grasses, moist and green,
I now would moor my boat and make
  A survey of the lonely scene.

Here all is sad and still and grey;
  Wide water-fields around me lie;
Cool mirrors that for miles away
  Reflect the pale October sky.

Where at the city's boundary
  Trees crowd and garden-bushes spread,
Wan, slanting sunlight fitfully
  Brightens their blots of brown and red,

Or touches on the ocean-rim
  Afar, some ochre-tinted sail
Of speeding boat where Chioggians swim
  Out of the Adriatic gale.

From pilèd barge that blocks the stream
  Some dog at sea-bird wheeling low
Bays; and I hear the madmen scream
  In sinister San Servolo.

No other living noise, no cry;
  The Sea-Queen wears her saddest dress;
And my soul all insensibly
  Catches her mood of mournfulness.

Fairer she seemed when April light
  And fragrance played around her throne,
Or when through all some languid night
  Large yellow worlds above her shone.

Forsaken, now, her briny streets;
  No red-booked strangers pass and pry;
No crowded gondola one meets
  Rocking its careless company.

The window-panes above the quay,
  Row upon row and square on square,
Seem human faces turned to me
  With melancholy, vacant stare.

What would they watch? Some gleaming train
  Of galleys go in silver state?
One black hull only drifts amain
  With one sad passenger as freight.

PERCY E. PINKERTON.

AN AUTUMN LANDSCAPE.

A WITHERING splendor of slim goldenrods
Plumed many a knoll, and rich imperial tints
Yet lingered in the clustering aster sprays.
The encrimsoned sumachs lifted garnet knots
Of fruitage, and a murmurous maple grove
Blazed as with blended scarlets, pinks and golds
Of some thick, gaudy stuff from Orient looms.
Those plenteous vines, the ivies of our west,
Wrapt with their vivid and luxurious red
The yellowing hickory's trunk or the dark fringe
Of oval cedars; heavy from lithe stems
Drooped the black lustrous beads of the elderflower,
And roseate on their prickly girandoles
Burned the pale delicate thistles like thin flames.
Faint lazy airs went wandering o'er the land,
Rustling the brittle pomp of low-fallen leaves,
And at the pale sky's limit, velvet-soft,
One stagnant ring of smoky purple drowsed.

EDGAR FAWCETT.
Alan Eliot.

TORCHLIGHT IN FALL-TIME

I LIFT this sumach bough with crimson flare
  And, touched with subtle pangs of dreamy pain,
Through the dark wood a torch I seem to bear
  In autumn's funeral train.

JOHN JAMES PIATT.

A REMEMBRANCE OF AUTUMN.

NOTHING stirs the sunny silence,
  Save the drowsy humming of the bees
    Round the rich ripe peaches on the wall,
  And the south wind sighing in the trees,
    And the dead leaves rustling as they fall:
  While the swallows, one by one, are gathering
    All impatient to be on the wing,
  And to wander from us seeking
    Their beloved spring!

Cloudless rise the azure heavens!
  Only vaporous wreaths of snowy white
    Nestle in the grey hill's rugged side;
  And the golden woods are bathed in light,
    Dying if they must, with kingly pride:
  While the swallows, in the blue air wheeling,
    Circle now an eager, fluttering band,
  Ready to depart and leave us
    For a brighter land!

But a voice is sounding sadly,
  Telling of a glory that has been;
    Of a day that faded all too fast:
  See afar through the blue air serene,
    Where the swallows wing their way at last,

And our hearts perchance as sadly wandering,
  Vainly seeking for a long-lost day,
While we watch the far-off swallows,
  Flee with them away!

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

THE GOLDSPINK AND THISTLE.

OUR marly road is cracked and white:
  There they be, the spink and thistle.
  O the seed! but O the bristle!
Hovering on the bursting head.
  (Rough, the more to make him tinkle;
  Rough, the more to make him twinkle)
The goldspink hangs: the down is shed,
October, in thy windy light.

How sweet to think
You, little spink,
  Far back in the abysses deep
  Where thought conditioned fails to sweep,
Rose all a-flutter on the Central Mind
Pleased with thy archetypal delicate tinklings,
Pleased with thy golden twinklings,
To show thee best,
For man a zest,
He hung thee on the thistle in the wind.

THOMAS AIRD.

A SONG IN OCTOBER.

Oh, hear ye not a voice that comes a-singing through
the trees,
Across the mead and down the dell, along the dying
breeze?
And hear ye not the burden of its melancholy song,
Upon the lingering winds of autumn sadly borne
along?
"Home, shepherds; home, sheep; winter cometh
near:
Wither, flowers; fall, leaves; days will soon be
drear."

And hear ye not another voice a-sighing o'er the
main,
Across the surf, along the beach, a monody of pain?
Oh, tremble while ye listen to its melancholy song,
Upon the lingering winds of autumn sadly borne
along:
"Part, lovers; part, maids; winter cometh near:
Sleep, kisses; die, love; life will soon be drear."

William James Henderson.

ROBIN REDBREAST.

(*A Child's Song.*)

GOODBYE, goodbye to summer,
  For summer's nearly done;
The garden smiling faintly,
  Cool breezes in the sun;
Our thrushes now are silent,
  Our swallows flown away,
But robin's here, in coat of brown,
  And scarlet breastknot gay.
Robin, robin redbreast,
  O robin dear!
Robin sings so sweetly
  In the falling of the year.

Bright, yellow, red and orange,
  The leaves come down in hosts;
The trees are Indian princes,
  But soon they'll turn to ghosts;
The leathery pears and apples
  Hang russet on the bough;
It's autumn, autumn, autumn late,
  'Twill soon be winter now.
Robin, robin redbreast,
  O robin dear!
And what will this poor robin do?
  For pinching days are near.

. . . . .

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

AN OCTOBER DAY.

THE emergent sun looks forth on sparkling grass,
  Filmed with the frost's pale gossamer of snow.
  And now long resonant breezes wake and blow
The empurpled mists from meadow and morass.
The withering aster shivers; dry leaves pass;
  Red sumachs burn; the yellowing birches glow;
And on the elastic air, in many a mass,
  Rolling through pale-blue heaven, the great clouds go.
In the afternoon all windy sounds are still:
  From wooded ways the crickets' chirp takes flight,
And the dreamy autumn hours lapse on until,—
  See, the sweet evening-star, that night by night
Drops luminous, like an ever-falling tear,
Down dying twilights of the dying year.

EDGAR FAWCETT.

WOODBINES IN OCTOBER.

As dyed in blood, the streaming vines appear,
  While long and low the wind about them grieves;
The heart of autumn must have broken here
  And poured its treasure out upon the leaves.

CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES.

AN AUTUMN-BLOOMING ROSE.

I FOUND, and plucked, an autumn-blooming rose,
  And shut my eyes, and scented all its savor;
When lo! as in the month the black thorn blows,
  Lambs 'gan to bleat, and merle and lark to quaver.

Flower of my life! inestimately dear,
  Now that its calendar wanes sere and sober,
To me your freshness, turning back the year,
  Makes that seem April others call October.

With me 'tis autumn, and with you 'tis spring,
  But Love hath brought these seasons sweet together.
Within your leafy life I sit and sing,
  And you with me share wealth of harvest weather.

Thus all things we exchange, and nothing lose:
  Take you life's wisdom, lend to me life's sweetness.
Your vernal voice shall wed my mellow muse,
  And song give youth, and youth give song, completeness.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

OCTOBER.

THE month of carnival of all the year,
  When Nature lets the wild earth go its way,
  And spend whole seasons on a single day.
The springtime holds her white and purple dear:
October, lavish, flaunts them far and near.
  The summer charily her reds doth lay
  Like jewels on her costliest array:
October, scornful, burns them on a bier.
The winter hoards his pearls of frost, in sign
  Of kingdom: whiter pearls than winter knew,
Or empress wore, in Egypt's ancient line,
  October, feasting 'neath her dome of blue,
  Drinks at a single draught, slow filtered through
Sunshiny air, as in a tingling wine!

MRS. HELEN MARIA [FISKE] [HUNT] JACKSON.

MID-AUTUMN.

IN the slant sunlight of the young October,
Dew-dashed lay meadow, upland, wood and pool;
Mid-time delicious, when all hues are sober,
All sounds are undertone, all airs are cool:
When Nature seems to pause awhile and probe her,
Asking her heart if her eventful rule
Hath blest the earth she loveth, and to brace her
Against the wintry darksome days that face her.

ALFRED AUSTIN.
The Human Tragedy.

AUTUMN SONG.

No clouds are in the morning sky,
  The vapors hug the stream:
Who says that life and love can die
  In all this northern gleam?
At every turn the maples burn,
  The quail is whistling free,
The partridge whirrs, and the frosted burrs
  Are dropping for you and me.
Ho! hilly ho! heigh O!
Hilly ho!
In the clear October morning.

Along our path the woods are bold,
  And glow with rife desire;
The yellow chestnut showers its gold,
  The sumachs spread their fire;
The breezes feel as crisp as steel,
  The buckwheat tops are red:
Then down the lane, love, scurry again,
  And over the stubble tread!
Ho! hilly ho! heigh O!
Hilly ho!
In the clear October morning.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

FALL.

I HEARD a tree to its sole self complain,
Amid whose robes of rust and scarlet stain
The solemn sunshine poured its golden rain.

Strange as the mournful sounds that steal through sleep,
As if a mist should strive in dews to weep,
The low, sad cadence past my sense did creep.

"Ah! little, tender, dancing leaves, that first
Out of my sere and wintry branches burst,
With mildest showers and April sunshine nurst;

"More verdant garlands, fresh with life and June,
Wherein the light winds played a fairy tune,
And set them glittering to the quiet moon;

"Then, in their prime, the thick green summer leaves,
Lost in whose rustling depth the thicket grieves,
Or the quaint spider radiant tracery weaves;

"Swift ye forsake, slow fluttering to the ground,
These desolate boughs no more with glory crowned,
Where every rain may breathe its sighing sound.

"One, and another, and another yet;
No time for grief to ripen to regret!
Full on my brow stands the sharp coronet.

"Did the cold terror, curdling at my heart,
Strike sudden death, and force your clasp apart,
I too were all too chill to feel ye part.

"But warm and fierce the vital torrent flows,
As keener thorns surround the brightest rose,
Death's bitterest draught life's ardor only knows."

MRS. ROSE [TERRY] COOKE.

COME, LET US GO INTO THE LANE.

COME, let us go into the lane, love mine,
  And mark and gather what the autumn grows:
The creamy elder mellowed into wine,
  The russet hip that was the pink-white rose;
The amber woodbine into rubies turned,
  The blackberry that was the bramble born;
Nor let the seeded clematis be spurned,
  Nor pearls, that now are corals, of the thorn.
Look! what a lovely posy we have made
  From the wild garden of the waning year.
So when, dear love, your summer is decayed,
  Beauty more touching than is clustered here
Will linger in your life, and I shall cling
Closely as now, nor ask if it be spring.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

OCTOBER.

THE very air
Has grown heroic; a few crimson leaves
Have fallen here; yet not to yield their breath
In pitiful sighing at so sad a fate,
But royally, as with spilt blood of kings:
The full life throbs exultant in my veins,
Till half ashamed to wear so high a mood,
Not for some splendid triumph of the soul,
But simply in response to light and air,
Slowly I let it fall.
And later, steal
Down the broad garden walk, where cool and clear
The sharp-defined, white moonlight marks the path.
Not the young moon that shy and wavering down
Trembled through leafy tracery of the boughs
In happy nights of June; the peace that wraps
Me here is not the warm and golden peace
Of summer afternoons that lull the soul
To dreamy indolence; but strong white peace,
Peace that is conscious power in repose.
No fragrance floats on the autumnal air,
The white chrysanthemums and asters star
The frosty silence, but their leaves exhale
No passion of remembrance or regret.
The perfect calmness and the perfect strength

My senses wrap in an enchanted robe
Woven of frost and fire; while in my soul
Blend the same mingled sovereignty and rest;
As if indeed my spirit had drained deep
Some delicate elixir of rich wine,
Ripened beneath the haughtiest of suns,
Then cooled with flakes of snow.

MRS. ALICE MARLAND [WELLINGTON] ROLLINS.

OCTOBER'S HUSBANDRY.

Now lay up thy barley land, dry as ye can,
Whenever ye sow it, so look for it than:
Get daily beforehand, be never behind,
Lest winter preventing do alter thy mind.

Who layeth up fallow, too soon or too wet,
With noyances many doth barley beset:
For weed and the water so soaketh and sucks,
That goodness from either, it utterly plucks.

Green rye in September, when timely thou hast,
October for wheat-sowing calleth as fast:
If weather will suffer, this counsel I give,
Leave sowing of wheat before Hallowmas eve.

THOMAS TUSSER.
Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry.

OCTOBER.

THROUGH golden noons and purple eves, and shadows cool and tender,
From scenes of tranquil happiness and dreams of deep delight,
October like a princess in her oriental splendor
Comes down the valley singing with her retinue of light.

O crimson days and golden! O wealth of garnet treasure!
O vintages whose presses pour the royal wine of life!
Give joy, and peace, and plenty in the largest of your measure,
For the coming days are dreary days of turmoil and of strife.

MRS. KATHARINE MARGARET [BROWNLEE] SHERWOOD.

AUTUMN.

WITH what a glory comes and goes the year!
The buds of spring, those beautiful harbingers
Of sunny skies and cloudless times, enjoy
Life's newness, and earth's garniture spread out;
And when the silver habit of the clouds

Comes down upon the autumn sun, and with
A silver gladness the old year takes up
His bright inheritance of golden fruits,
A pomp and pageant fill the splendid scene.

There is a beautiful spirit breathing now
Its mellow richness on the clustered trees,
And, from a beaker full of richest dyes,
Pouring new glory on the autumn woods,
And dipping in warm light the pillared clouds.
Morn on the mountain, like a summer bird,
Lifts up her purple wing, and in the vales
The gentle wind, a sweet and passionate wooer,
Kisses the blushing leaf, and stirs up life
Within the solemn woods of ash deep-crimsoned,
And silver beech, and maple yellow-leaved,
Where autumn, like a faint old man, sits down
By the wayside aweary. Through the trees
The golden robin moves. The purple finch,
That on wild cherry and red cedar feeds,
A winter bird, comes with its plaintive whistle,
And pecks by the witch-hazel, whilst aloud
From cottage roofs the warbling bluebird sings,
And merrily, with oft-repeated stroke,
Sounds from the threshing-floor the busy flail.

O what a glory doth this world put on
For him who, with a fervent heart, goes forth
Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks
On duties well performed, and days well spent!

For him the wind, ay, and the yellow leaves,
Shall have a voice, and give him eloquent teachings.
He shall so hear the solemn hymn that death
Has lifted up for all, that he shall go
To his long resting place without a tear.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

IN OCTOBER.

A FLUSHED cathedral, grand with loneliness,
  Gloomy with light and bright with shadow, seems
  Thy catholic air, October. Holiest gleams
Alight like angels in each dim recess
Through the stained oriels of the east and west;
  Thy floors float radiant with flutterings
  Of moving shadows, ghosts of glorious wings;
Some organ's soul arises in the breast
  Of him who walks thy aisles in revery bound:
  The stops of silence tremble into sound.
Lo, Nature brings her dead for burial rite!
  Upon thy solemn altars dressed for death
She lays her beautiful; the mother's brow
  Is bowed while for her darling ones she grieves
  And o'er their burial breathes her tenderest breath
As o'er their baptism in the April light;
And autumn, gorgeous preacher, murmurs now
  Sermons of dying flowers and falling leaves.

JOHN JAMES PIATT.

A LAMENT FOR THE SUMMER.

MOAN, O ye Autumn Winds!
Summer has fled,
The flowers have closed their tender leaves and died;
The lily's gracious head
All low must lie,
Because the gentle Summer now is dead.

Grieve, O ye Autumn Winds!
Summer lies low;
The rose's trembling leaves will soon be shed,
For she that loved her so,
Alas! is dead,
And one by one her loving children go.

Wail, O ye Autumn Winds!
She lives no more,
The gentle Summer, with her balmy breath,
Still sweeter than before
When nearer death,
And brighter every day the smile she wore!

Mourn, mourn, O Autumn Winds!
Lament and mourn;
How many half-blown buds must close and die;
Hopes with the Summer born
All faded lie,
And leave us desolate and earth forlorn.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

IN THE OCTOBER FIELDS.

THE bright-robed Days sit now at feast, and sup
  From golden service heaped with fruits divine.
The waning Year drains from October's cup
  The melancholy cheer of autumn's wine.

A ruddier tide fills now the tingling veins
  And life takes on a sturdier-hearted tone.
Care's hungering grasp the mounting soul disdains,
  And scorns to count the sorrows she hath known:
  What matters it if summer's birds have flown,
And rustling leaves drift on the upland plains?
Though Nature's wide arms bear her precious grains
  To fragrant hidden garners of her own,
Yet what her lavish lap hath spilled remains,
  For careful gleaning is to her unknown.
  From her full hand her ripened seeds are thrown
On springing fields late-freshened from the rains,
  And hope's clear bugle on the hills is blown
By comely lips made moist with fruity stains.

Shall we be found less generous to our souls
  Than are the seasons to the patient earth?
Shall we yet choose to drift in mental shoals
  Where weak-winged fancies only find a birth?

Shall we be found more niggard of our store
  Than are the flame-crowned princes of the wood,
While at our heart's inhospitable door
  A brother faints for some withholden good?

The richest gifts of Nature kept unshared
Become but poverty; goods unbestowed,
  Like fruits ungathered, shrivel into blight
Which mars the soul's new blossoming; the road
Of excellence was by some god prepared
  So that no souls might win the glorious height
Save those unweighted by that hindering load.

ROBERT BURNS WILSON.

A SYCAMORE IN OCTOBER.

'WAY up at the top of the sycamore tree,
All leafless and bare are the branches I see.
  It seems like the winter,
  The desolate winter,
    To me.

A little way down are the leaflets all gold
And russet and cardinal curled in the cold.
  The autumn, the autumn,
  The ripe rosy autumn
    Behold.

Upon a gaunt limb in the sunshiny sheen
The leaflets are blowing a delicate green.
The summer, the summer,
The dream-haunted summer
Serene.

Oh, here are the seasons all four on the tree,
"But where is the springtime?" you question of me.
The springtime, the springtime,
The bloom-scented springtime?
Ah, see.

Just under the boughs where the shadows are met,
All shining with smiles under lashes of jet, —
Why, there is the springtime,
My own private springtime,
Babette.

RICHARD KENDALL MUNKITTRICK.

THE FLIGHT OF THE BIRDS.

O WISE little birds, how do ye know
The way to go
Southward and northward, to and fro?

Far up in the ether pipèd they,
"We but obey
One who calleth us far away.

"He calleth and calleth year by year,
Now there, now here;
Ever he maketh the way appear."

Dear little birds, He calleth me
Who calleth ye:
Would that I might as trusting be!

HARRIET MCEWEN KIMBALL.

MINIVER TO THE FAIRIES.

. . . . . Now must ye lead along
The sober hours athwart the fading woods.
To you belong the brooding thoughts that fill
Autumn's pale boscage and make mortals ponder.
And yet forget not these our pensioners,
Who shared our joy in the warm dewy nights,
Wild flowers that pass away. Be it your care
To soothe the pressure of decay and tend
The drooping stalk. Speed on his aery voyage
The ghostly thistle down, and find him space
To plant his venturous seed. Drape the tall fern
With cobweb tracery; warn the lingering foxglove
To shake away her last red bells, as knowing
Summer is dead and gone:— the heath herself
Begins to change her purple robe, and don
The sombre brown.

CHARLES GIPPS PROWETT.
The Shepherd Lord.

OCTOBER.

THE swollen grapes upon the vine
Seem bursting with their purple wine,
And underneath the scattered leaves remind me of the year's decline.

A languor fills these autumn days,
And mellower shine the sun's soft rays;
Beside the stream the golden reed with listless motion idly sways.

Her silver threads the spider weaves;
Ungarnered stand the yellow sheaves;
And burn like tongues of lurid flame the glowing maple's crimson leaves.

Like ships becalmed the white clouds lie
Along the dim horizon sky,
And flocks of birds that southward roam on restless wing go sailing by.

Down looking from this wooded steep
I see the sinuous river creep
Past sheltered farms; and far away, cloaked with pale mist the mountains sleep.

. . . .

NATHAN G. SHEPHERD.

CRICKET-CRIES.

If the autumn winds are all
  In a tender sort of swoon,
You can hear the cricket call,
  Any autumn afternoon;
  And should you heed him, soon
You will hear, it may befall,
  Dreamy language wing its way
  Through his low and dreamy lay:

"By the mist-empurpled skies,
  By the red leaves lying sere,
I know that summer dies
  In the lands that held her dear.
  And with his sparkling spear,
With his icy-brilliant eyes,
  Snowy-bearded winter speeds
  On his whitest of white steeds.

"O the days will shortly be
  When here I must not cheep,
But in some black chink and wee
  Of some old fireside creep,
  To sleep and wake and sleep,
By the great log's yellow glee,
  And slowly find, no doubt,
  All the family secrets out.

"From the hearthfire's viewless flail
I can see the spark-chaff fly,
Ere that ashy film and pale
Furs the embers, by and by.
And much better taste have I
Than my relative the snail,
Toasting here, as fate appoints,
My extravagant hip-joints.

"Hear the clock's quick tick, above
Even the bitter north wind's roar;
Hear the old grandam, like a dove,
Coo her surreptitious snore;
Hear the lovers laugh, — and more,
See the lovers making love!
And hear the purr of that
Tawny sybarite, our cat.

"How I hearken, while I bask,
To the hum the kettle wakes.
In his dull prosaic task
How much merriment he takes.
Ah, for me that kettle makes
All the nightingale I ask,
Except it be, mayhap,
The pine log's bubbling sap.

"Why does Mabel grow so pink
If she has not had a kiss?
It is fine, you lovers think,
To be making love like this;
Yet a pleasant blaze, I wis,
And a cosy little chink,
Bring quite as much content
To the cricket temperament.

"While the goldenrods, in seas,
Plume the lanes and dales with gold,
While a glory smites the trees
And the sumach leaves burn bold,
In my longing heart I hold
These, and pictures sweet as these,
Waiting days more bleak and drear,
That my fireside voice can cheer.

"O for winds of solemn tune!
O for chilly-lighted skies!
Since she cannot die too soon,
O too slow the summer dies!"
Now in just this dreamy wise,
On an autumn afternoon,
If your faith be good and strong,
You can hear the cricket's song.

EDGAR FAWCETT.

AN AUTUMN SONG.

LIME,— golden lime!
Bright burst thy greenness forth to April's tender wooing,
Thronged of the booming bee in verdurous summer's prime;
Ah, sere and shriveling now, the miry way 'tis strewing,
Lime,— golden lime!

Lime,— golden lime!
What though thy parting leaves the wailing winds are calling,
What though to sereness all hath changed thy vernal prime,
Why should we mourn that fast thy golden glory's falling,
Lime,— golden lime?

Lime,— golden lime!
Yes,— thou in thought shalt come when gloomy gusts are shrilling
Along the wan wide snows in winter's hueless time,
The chill and pallid day with autumn glory filling,
Lime,— golden lime!

WILLIAM COX BENNETT.

THE FROST.

THE frost is out, and in the open fields,
  And late within the woods, I marked his track;
The unwary flower his icy fingers feels,
  And at their touch the crispèd leaf rolls back;
Look, how the maple o'er a sea of green
  Waves in the autumnal wind his flag of red!
First struck of all the forest's spreading screen,
  Most beauteous, too, the earliest of her dead.
Go on: thy task is kindly meant by Him
  Whose is each flower and richly covered bough;
And though the leaves hang dead on every limb,
  Still will I praise His love, that early now
Has sent before this herald of decay
To bid me heed before the approach of winter's
    sterner day.

JONES VERY.

OCTOBER.

THINE hour is come, O minstrel of the year!
  The daughters of the summer, one by one,
    Have passed in beauty by,
    Fulfilling each her happy ministry,—
  They of the bud, the bloom, the fruit are gone,
  And now the sovereign sun stoops kindly near,
Beckoning to thee, the last, the loveliest, to appear.

Spirit of beauty! even imperial June
Pales in thy presence; though her brow she twine
With lily and with rose,
And silvery white her bridal vesture flows.
Her loveliness is of the perfect noon,
Thine of the sunset, when heaven's colors shine
And flood the dazzled earth with brilliancy divine.

I see thee linger in the dusky wood,
Thy pensive gaze uplifted to the skies
As if in some long dream
Thou hadst been waiting for this hour supreme.
A listening hush upon the forest lies,
For yet unused to this strange solitude
All Nature seems to share thy rapt, expectant mood.

Sing, poet of the year! the musing hours
Thrill with a tender awe since thou art near:
The very winds are still
And breathless odors waft o'er vale and hill.
Touch thy soft harp to numbers low and clear,
And while the leaves fall in forsaken bowers
Breathe in Æolian tones the death song of the flowers.

And sing of those who all around us lie
In silence wrapt and holden from our sight,
Even as the frozen mold
Will soon thy glorious crimson vesture hold.
Yet dost thou smile at winter's deathly night.
Thy beauty lives, an endless prophecy
That death is but a sleep and we shall never die.

Thy first prelusive note is like a bell
Summoning earth to memory and to prayer.
Through all thy golden days
May our full hearts in kindred tones of praise
The rapture of thy minstrel spirit share.
Then with thy closing anthem's joyous swell,
From new found heights of peace, we may respond, —
Farewell!

MRS. FRANCES [LAUGHTON] MACE.

THE FALL OF THE YEAR.

Now flowers of deeper hue and scarlet glow;
Or in rich purple the white bosom lies;
And leopard-spots of blossom's golden eyes
On hillsides green and sky-domed commons show;
And the blue heaven over her doth throw
Her thinnest web of fair and lawny haze;
And suns retire from proud accustomed ways,
At nearer tides of night's great overflow;
And green-flushed earth in dreamy autumn light
A gilded change to many colors sees
Through all her shrubby lanes and branching trees,
Nor thinks the king whose banners hang so bright,
Will break her leafy sceptre, and affright
With stormy snows her vales and upland leas.

All the Year Round, 1870.

THE AUTUMN CYCLAMEN.

A LITTLE timid thing it is
  And though its sisters all are round
It trembles at the slightest breeze,
  And ever gazes on the ground.

It does not dare to be alone,
  And almost shudders to be seen,
And yet it wears a purple crown
  As it were born to be a queen.

The summer's latest child, it rears
  Its slender form of bashful grace
And has its mother's dying tears
  Upon its pallid little face.

The autumn when it earliest comes,
  Like a new stepmother is mild,
But soon a sterner look assumes
  And harshly chills the orphan child.

We see her in the dried-up grass,
  With yellow leaves around her shed,
Fearing, when we who love her pass,
  And hanging down her pensive head.

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY.

THE GRASS WORLD DIES IN THE AUTUMN DAYS.

AH, the grass-world dies in the autumn days,
  When, studded with sheaf and stack,
The fields lie browning in sullen haze,
  And creak in the farmer's track.
Hushed is the tumult the daisies knew,
The hidden sport of the supple crew;
  And lonely and dazed in the glare of day,
  The stiff-kneed hoppers refuse to play
In the stubble that mocks the blue.
  For all things feel that the time is drear
  When life runs low in the heart of the year.

MRS. MARY [MAPES] DODGE.

AN AUTUMN SONG.

O HEARKEN, Love, across the moat,
  And up the flaming dingle,
The lusty songs of reapers float,
  And sheepbells faintly mingle.
The gorse upon the hillside burns,
  And o'er the purple heather
The yellow sunlight softly yearns
  Through this October weather.

. . . . .

JAMES BENJAMIN KENYON.

THE FLIGHT OF THE BIRDS.

WHITHER away, robin,
Whither away?
Is it through envy of the maple leaf,
Whose blushes mock the crimson of thy breast,
Thou wilt not stay?
The summer days were long, yet all too brief
The happy season thou hast been our guest:
Whither away?

Whither away, bluebird,
Whither away?
The blast is chill, yet in the upper sky
Thou still canst find the color of thy wing,
The hue of May.
Warbler, why speed thy southern flight? ah, why,
Thou, too, whose song first told us of the spring?
Whither away?

Whither away, swallow,
Whither away?
Canst thou no longer tarry in the north,
Here, where our roof so well hath screened thy nest?
Not one short day?
Wilt thou — as if thou human wert — go forth
And wanton far from them who love thee best?
Whither away?

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

AN AUTUMN VIOLET.

THE wind shrieks in shrill discontent,
  The clouds frown their pitiless warning,
With frost-pearls the ground is besprent
  This dreary and sorrowful morning.
Yet here, dreading not the bleak day,
  Nor the cold sky so frigidly glooming,
Is a ghost of the long-buried May,
  A violet, sweet and fresh-blooming!

Ah, the days may be sullen and sober,
  The nights may be stormy and cold;
  But, for him who has eyes to behold,
The violets bloom in October!

Poor foundling! thy welcome is cold,
  Granted after a merciless fashion;
For the year has grown fretful and old,
  And knows neither love nor compassion.
O of all the misfortunes which here
  Make life so oppressive and weary,
To be born at the wrong time of year
  Is surely most lonesome and dreary!

Ah, the morn may be solemn and sober,
  And sombre and cheerless the eve,
  But, for those who have souls to perceive,
The violets bloom in October!

Lift up thine unfearing blue eye,
  O brave but mistaken newcomer,
And tell, while the snowflakes blow by,
  What wondering sprite of the summer,
Betrayed by some bright autumn day,
  Whose treachery all should remember,
Has left thee, in fear and dismay,
  On the doorstep of cruel November.

O, the days may be sullen and sober,
  The nights may be windy and cold,
  But, for him who has eyes to behold,
The violets bloom in October!

MRS. ELIZABETH ANN [CHASE] [AKERS] ALLEN.

STAY ME NO MORE.

STAY me no more; the flowers have ceased to blow,
  The frost begun;
Stay me no more; I will arise and go,
  My dream is done.

My feet are set upon a sterner way,
  And I must on;
Love, thou hast dwelt with me a summer day,
  Now, Love, begone.

ERNEST MYERS.

THE AUTUMNAL MOON.

WILD splendor of the various-vested night!
  Mother of wildly-working visions, hail!
I watch thy gliding, while with watery light
  Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil,
And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud
  Behind the gathered blackness lost on high;
And when thou dartest from the wind-rent cloud
  Thy placid lightning o'er the awakened sky.

. . . . . .

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

AN OCTOBER HUSH.

THE small red maple leaves, keen-scented, mute,
  Here fleck the stream, to grape-dark purple hushed:
More rich and lovelier than bloom or fruit
  Since honey-hearted snowy May-buds blushed.

Between the quick impulsive summer's heat
  And deep clear-eyed unhasting after-days,
Fall these few hours of warm ripe light, more sweet
  Than since those apple-pink new morns of May's.

BLISS CARMAN.

OCTOBER.

LONG looked for was the summer. Anxious eyes
  Noted the budding bough, the crocus flame,
That told its coming. Now, 'neath autumn skies
  The leaves fall slowly, slowly as they came.

There is no need to watch while winter weaves
  Fair buds to crown another golden prime,
For something heavier than the autumn leaves
  Has hidden eyes that looked for summertime.

The trees shall wake from their forgetful sleep
  Unto new blossom and a tender green —
The countless trees! — but never one will keep
  A little leaf or flower that she has seen!

MARGARET VELEY.

AN AUTUMN SONG.

THE wind is sighing,
The rose is dying,
The swallow is flying
  Over the sea;
The leaf is yellow,
The fruit hangs mellow.
The summer's knell, low,
  Sounds o'er the lea.

Winter is coming,
East winds are dumbing,
The golden bee's humming,
    The reaper's at rest;
Young Love, a rover
'Mong corn and clover,
His wanderings over,
    Flies to my breast.

HORACE L. NICHOLSON.

OCTOBER.

THROUGH golden gates of leaves, through columns grey
Of elms and maples old, whose boughs enlace
In bright cathedral arches overhead,
Enwreathed with scarlet vines; through bosky tufts
Of underbrush, and willows still so green
Along the hidden brooks, they seem to hold
The summer snared, nor heed the threatening frost,
The calm October days pass one by one,
Smiling in rosy sunsets, ere they flit
Forever from the earth. How silently
They march, timed to the crickets' ceaseless chirp
Through the still noon, while tail flowers mark their path,
Blue succory, purple asters, goldenrod,
Wild yellow stars, and lovely cardinal flowers
Whose crimson petals light the sluggish streams.

A clear and wholesome spirit in the air
Touches the earth and all earth's greenest robes
With change so gradual we can feel no loss
Of life, but only mellower, richer hues, —
With music more pathetic, as the wind
Harps through the woods, and red and yellow leaves
Flutter to earth, and whirl in huddled heaps.
So may our little lives, their sap withdrawn,
After their long, still summers, tossed, perchance,
At times, by thunder-gusts, or drenched in rains
Of tears, pass peacefully, complete in years
And in that wisdom years alone can bring;
And, having well fulfilled their allotted work,
Sink to their rest, or to their life beyond.

CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH.

OCTOBER.

IT is no joy to me to sit
  On dreamy summer eves,
When silently the timid moon
  Kisses the sleeping leaves,
And all things through the fair hushed earth
  Love, rest, — but nothing grieves.
Better I like old autumn,
  With his hair tossed to and fro,
Firm striding o'er the stubblefields
  When the equinoctials blow.

When shrinkingly the sun creeps up
  Through misty mornings cold,
And robin on the orchard hedge
  Sings cheerily and bold,
While heavily the frosted plum
  Drops downward on the mold;
And as he passes, autumn
  Into earth's lap does throw
Brown apples gay in a game of play,
  As the equinoctials blow.

When the spent year its carol sinks
  Into a humble psalm,
Asks no more for the pleasure draught,
  But for the cup of balm,
And all its storms and sunshine bursts
  Controls to one brave calm, —
Then step by step walks autumn,
  With steady eyes that show
Nor grief nor fear, to the death of the year
  While the equinoctials blow.

MRS. DINAH MARIA [MULOCK] CRAIK.

IN OCTOBER.

FROM purple hills and dimpling rills,
  The blue mists curling rise,
The seagull dips by home-bound ships,
The south-wooed swallow fleeing sips,
  By inland lakes, good-byes.

A sigh runs through the liquid blue,
And quivers at the heart,
For cold the wind the home-ships find,
And dark the days birds leave behind,
In woodland and in mart.

. . . .

MRS. KATHARINE MARGARET [BROWNLEE] SHERWOOD.

ON AN AUTUMN MORNING.

IT was a fair and mild autumnal sky,
And earth's ripe treasure met the admiring eye,
As a rich beauty, when her bloom is lost,
Appears with more magnificence and cost:
The wet and heavy grass, where feet had strayed,
Not yet erect, the wanderer's way betrayed;
Showers of the night had swelled the deepening rill,
The morning breeze had urged the quickening mill;
Assembled rooks had winged their seaward flight,
By the same passage to return at night,
While proudly o'er them hung the steady kite,
Then turned him back, and left the noisy throng,
Nor deigned to know them as he sailed along.
Long yellow leaves, from osiers, strewed around,
Choked the small stream, and hushed the feeble sound,
While the dead foliage dropped from loftier trees.

GEORGE CRABBE.
Tales of the Hall.

THE AUTUMN, O THE AUTUMN.

THE Autumn, O the Autumn!
  Who does not know it well?
When the leaf turns brown, and the mast drops down,
  And the chestnut splits its shell.
When we muse o'er the days that have gone before,
  And the days that will follow after,
When the grain lies deep on the winnowing-floor,
  And the plump gourd hangs from the rafter;
    In the Autumn, thoughtful Autumn!

ALFRED AUSTIN.

OCTOBER.

I LOVE the time of autumn's fading groves;
  For with the sere and yellow leaf appears
A dreamy sadness, that my spirit loves,
  And loves the more with my departing years.
How soft the light that lies on all the scene,
  How sweet the stillness of the hazy noon,
When first succeed to summer's living green
  The autumn splendors. Then the glorious moon
Sails in a purer heaven, and bright stars shed
  A blessed radiance on the paths of men;
And they who walked with timid steps in dread
  Of fell disease, at length breathe free again.
Through all the land the hand of death is stayed,
  And pallid cheeks with healthful bloom are spread.

JOHN HOWARD BRYANT.

OCTOBER.

SEPTEMBER days were green and fair,
But sharp winds pierced the shining air,
That froze the dimples of the river,
And made the wayside blossom shiver.

September's heart was winter-steeled;
The frost lay white upon the field,
Day after day; the northern blast
Withered the bracken as it passed.

"The time of snow!" we said. Not yet!
Flushed with suffusions of regret,
Out of the south October came,
Setting the forest's heart aflame.

Summer returned with her, and still
She lingers with us: stream and hill
And wide fields waver like a dream
Through warm, soft mist and tender gleam.

Again the gentian dares unfold
Blue fringes closed against the cold;
Again, in mossy solitudes,
The glimmering aster lights the woods.

One mass of sunshine glows the beech;
Great oaks, in scarlet drapery, reach
Across the crimson blackberry vine,
Toward purple ash and sombre pine.

The orange-tinted sassafras
With quaintest foliage strews the grass;
Witch-hazel shakes her gold curls out,
Mid the red maple's flying rout.

Our forests that so lately stood
Like any green familiar wood,
Aladdin's fabulous tale repeat;
The trees drop jewels at our feet.

With every day some splendor strange!
With every hour some subtle change!
Of our plain world how could we guess
Such miracles of loveliness?

Ah, let the green Septembers go!
They promise more than they bestow;
But now the earth around us seems
Clad in the radiance of our dreams.

Omen of joy to thee and me,
Dear friend, may this rare season be.
Life has not had its perfect test;
Our latest years may be our best.

Heaven's inmost warmth may wait us still.
What if, beyond time's autumn chill,
There bless us, ere we hence depart,
A glad October of the heart!

LUCY LARCOM.

ONE OCTOBER DAY.

In the autumn woods he strolled,
Happy Tommy, four years old;
Heard his guardian sister calling,
"Do not watch the brown nuts falling;
Rather look upon the ground,
Where the fallen ones are found."

Was she wiser than the boy,
Who, with eyes ablaze with joy,
Cried, "O sister, sister, see
How God shakes the chestnut tree!"

CHARLES GORDON AMES.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE STORKS.

Where the Rhine loses his majestic force
In Belgian plains, won from the raging deep
By diligence amazing, and the strong,
Unconquerable hand of liberty,
The stork assembly meets; for many a day,
Consulting deep and various, ere they take
Their plumy voyage through the liquid sky.
And now their route designed, their leaders chose,

Their tribes adjusted, cleaned their vigorous wings;
And many a circle, many a short essay
Wheeled round and round, in congregation full,
The figured flight ascends; and, riding high
The aerial billows, mixes with the clouds.

JAMES THOMSON.
The Seasons.

AN OCTOBER GARDEN.

IN my autumn garden I was fain
  To mourn among my scattered roses;
  Alas for that last rosebud which uncloses
To autumn's languid sun and rain
When all the world is on the wane!
  Which has not felt the sweet constraint of June,
  Nor heard the nightingale in tune.

Broad-faced asters by my garden walk,
  You are but coarse compared with roses:
  More choice, more dear that rosebud which uncloses
Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,
That least and last which cold winds balk;
  A rose it is though least and last of all,
  A rose to me though at the fall.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI.

SUMMER GONE.

SMALL wren, mute pecking at the last red plum
Or twittering idly at the yellow boughs
Fruit-emptied, over thy forsaken house, —
Birdie that seems to come
Telling, we too have spent our little store,
Our summer's o'er;

Poor robin, driven in by rainstorms wild
To lie submissive under household hands
With beating heart that no love understands,
And scared eye, like a child
Who only knows that he is all alone
And summer's gone;

Pale leaves, sent flying wide, a frightened flock
On which the wolfish wind bursts out, and tears
Those tender forms that lived in summer airs
Till, taken at this shock,
They, like weak hearts when sudden grief sweeps by,
Whirl, drop, and die: —

All these things, earthy, of the earth, — do tell
This earth's perpetual story; we belong
Unto another country, and our song
Shall be no mortal knell;
Though all the year's tale, as *our* years run fast,
Mourns "summer's past."

O love immortal! O perpetual youth!
Whether in budding nooks it sits and sings
As hundred poets in a hundred springs,
Or, slaking passion's drouth,
In winepress of affliction, ever goes
Heavenward, through woes:

O youth immortal! O undying love!
With these by winter firesides we'll sit down
Wearing our snows of honor like a crown,
And sing as in a grove,
Where the full nests ring out with happy cheer,
"Summer is here."

Roll round, strange years; swift seasons, come and go;
Ye leave upon us but an outward sign;
Ye cannot touch the inward and divine,
Which God alone does know;
There sealed till summers, winters, all shall cease
In His deep peace.

Therefore uprouse, ye winds, and howl your will;
Beat, beat, ye sobbing rains, on pane and door;
Enter, slow-footed age, and thou, obscure,
Grand Angel, — not of ill;
Healer of every wound, where'er thou come,
Glad, we'll go home.

MRS. DINAH MARIA [MULOCK] CRAIK.

OCTOBER.

THE year grows old; summer's wild crown of roses
  Has fallen and faded in the woodland ways;
On all the earth a tranquil light reposes,
  Through the still dreamy days.

The dew lies heavy in the early morn
  On grass and mosses sparkling crystal fair;
And shining threads of gossamer are borne
  Floating upon the air,

Across the leaf-strewn lanes, from bough to bough,
  Like tissue woven in a fairy loom;
And crimson-berried bryony garlands glow
  Through the leaf-tangled gloom.

The woods are still, but for the sudden fall
  Of cupless acorns dropping to the ground,
Or rabbit plunging through the fern-stems tall
  Half-startled by the sound.

And from the garden-lawn comes, soft and clear,
  The robin's warble from the leafless spray,
The low sweet *Angelus* of the dying year,
  Passing in light away.

ANNIE DENT.

OCTOBER.

WHAT royal pomp invests these golden days,
  When the oblique and unaweary sun,
  His bright ecliptic journey almost run,
Kisses the leaning globe with tempered rays!
What pageantries of color blush or blaze
  Along the woods, of crimson, gold, and dun,
  When sunset strikes the mountains, one by one,
And kindles them to splendor as we gaze!
So dies the Year in beauty. On her cheek
This hectic soon will pale, and wan and weak,
  And all bereaved of her imperial charms,
  Winter shall fold her in his icy arms,
And draw above her form his spotless shroud,
While woodland winds shall wail with sorrow loud!

HENRY SYLVESTER CORNWELL.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE SWALLOW.

AND is the swallow gone?
  Who beheld it?
  Which way sailed it?
Farewell bade it none?

No mortal saw it go:
  But who doth hear
  Its summer cheer
As it flitteth to and fro?

So the freed spirit flies.
  From its surrounding clay
  It steals away
Like the swallow from the skies.

Whither? wherefore doth it go?
  'Tis all unknown:
  We feel alone
That a void is left below.

WILLIAM HOWITT.

OCTOBER.

EDGES of stormy dawn and murky night
  Trespassing harshly on his mellow hours,
  October plucks the present while it flowers,
And revels as a splendid Sybarite.
What though his noontide wear the yellow light
  Of sunset, hinting of the doom that lowers,
  He recks not: now astride the west wind scours
Blue steppes of air; now, languid with delight,
Reclines in violet haze; flings silver rime
  To the gossamer, bead coral to the thorns,
And showers on tree and fern his ruddy gold.
  But as pards couch until the herded horns
Slant valewards, Winter lets him pass his prime,
Then springs and hales him to the caves of Cold.

HENRY GAY HEWLETT.
An English Year.

JACK FROST AND THE KATYDID.

JACK FROST.

I HEARD, 'twas on an autumn night,
  A little song from yonder tree;
'Twas a katydid, in the branches hid,
  And thus sung he:

"Fair Katy sat beside yon stream,
  Beneath the chestnut tree;
Each star sent forth its brightest gleam,
And the moon let fall her softest beam
  On Katy and on me.

"And thus she wished — 'O could I sing
  Like the little birds in May,
With a satin breast and a silken wing,
And a leafy home by this gentle spring,
  I'd chirp as blithe as they.

"'The frog in the water, the cricket on land,
  The nighthawk in the sky,
With the whippoorwill should be my band,
While gayly by the streamlet's sand,
  The lightning bug should fly.'

"Her wish is granted, — off she flings
  The robes that her beauty hid;
She wraps herself in her silken wings,
And near me now she sits and sings,
  And tells what Katy did."

A beam from the waning moon was shot,
  Where the little minstrel hid,
A cobweb from the cloud was let,
  And down I boldly slid.

A hollow hailstone on my head,
  For a glittering helm was clasped
And a sharpened spear, like an icicle clear,
  In my cold little fingers was grasped.

Silent, and resting on their arms,
  I viewed my forces nigh,
Waiting the sign on earth to land,
  Or bivouac in the sky.

From a birchen bough which yellow turned
  Beneath my withering lance;
I pointed them to that glassy pool,
  And silently they advanced.

The water crisped beneath their feet,
  It never felt their weights:
And nothing but the rising sun,
  Showed traces of their skates.

No horn I sounded, no shout I made,
  But I lifted my vizor lid,
My felt-shod foot on the leaf I put,
  And killed the katydid.

Her song went down the southern wind,
  Her last breath up the stream,
But a rustling branch is left behind,
  To fan her wakeless dream.

JOHN GARDINER CALKINS BRAINARD.

IN THE WINDOW.

A STILL grey evening: autumn in the sky,
  And autumn on the hills and the sad wold;
  No congregated towers of pearl and gold
In the vaporous west, no fiend limned duskily,
No angel whose reared trump must soon be loud,
  Nor mountains which some pale green lake enfold,
  Nor islands in an ocean glacial-cold;
Hardly indeed a noticeable cloud.
Yet here I lingered, all my will asleep,
  Gazing an hour with neither joy nor pain,
No noonday trance in midsummer more deep;
And wake with a vague yearning in the dim
  Blind room, my heart scarce able to restrain
The idle tears that tremble to the brim.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

OCTOBER.

THE summer rose is dead;
The sad leaves, witherèd,
Strew ankle-deep the pathways to our tread.
Dry grasses mat the plain,
And drifts of blossom slain,
And day and night the wind is like a pain.

No nightingale to sing
In green boughs, listening,
Through balmy twilight hushes of the spring.
No thrush, no oriole
In music to outroll
The little golden raptures of his soul.

O royal summer-reign!
When will you come again,
Bringing the happy birds across the main?
O blossoms! when renew
Your pretty garbs, and woo
Your waiting, wild-bee lovers back to you?

For lo, my heart is numb;
For lo, my heart is dumb, —
Is silent till the birds and blossoms come!
A flower, that lieth cold
Under the wintry mold,
Waiting the warm spring-breathing to unfold.

O swallow! all too slow
Over the waves you go,
Dipping your light wings in their sparkling flow.
Over the golden sea,
O swallow, flying free,
Fly swiftly with the summer back to me.

INA DONNA COOLBRITH.

IN AUTUMN.

THE golden haze of autumn creeps and dallies
Above the far horizon's misty rim;
The golden lights of autumn fire the valleys,
While summer's fading beauties pale and dim.

And mellowed to a pure and deeper measure,
The murmuring wind sings lullabies of rest,
Low crooning to the safe and garnered treasure
That lies secure on Nature's breast.

Forgot in happier sense of full fruition,
The grime and heat of labor's unrest cease;
Earth sleeps from all the dreams that wait ambition,
And joins with Heaven in one fair hymn of peace.

. . . . . .

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH [MCGRATH] BLAKE.

AUTUMN VIOLETS.

KEEP love for youth, and violets for the spring:
  Or if these bloom when worn-out autumn grieves,
  Let them lie hid in double shade of leaves,
Their own, and others dropped down withering;
For violets suit when home birds build and sing,
  Not when the outbound bird a passage cleaves;
  Not with the stubble of mown harvest sheaves,
But when the green world buds to blossoming.
Keep violets for the spring, and love for youth,
  Love that should dwell with beauty, mirth, and hope:
  Or if a later sadder love be born,
  Let not this look for grace beyond its scope,
But give itself, nor plead for answering truth, —
  A grateful Ruth, though gleaning scanty corn.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI.

OCTOBER.

OF all the lovely seasons of the year,
None is so full of majesty as this,
When red October, like a king of old,
As wise as rich, and generous as wise,
Smiles on the untaxed garners of the land.

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.
The New Pastoral.

AN AUTUMN THOUGHT.

It was a calm October morn. The dell
After a frosty night lay thick with brown
Dead leaves. And still they stirred and fluttered down,
Leaving a fringe against the sky to tell
Where once that sky had been invisible,
Cloaked by their green luxuriance. And indeed
Mine eyes could notice how the vault thus freed,
Grew bright and brighter for each leaf that fell.
So cuts the frost which kills our summer vows,
When shades of bliss we hoped eterne decay,
And all our pleasant leaves are stripped away,
We find what ampler view the frost allows.
Through earthly damps we catch the heavenly day,
And God's truth clearest under cold bare boughs.

Edward Cracroft Lefroy.

FROST.

Frost, the destroyer, hath begun his work
Upon the foliage; leaves that were as bright,
With the clear dew upon them, as the light
Of lucent emeralds, show that in them lurk
Decay and death, — for the rich, hectic glow
Is burning in their cheeks, and they will fall
Before, with tender ministry, the snow
Shall hide them under an unspotted pall.

Soon will the voice of all the streams be still,
  And hushed the choir, that in the woodlands made
Harmony with those rejoicing thoughts that fill
  The universe around us. Grove and glade
Will doff their singing robes and garments fair,
And the white shrouds of icy winter wear.

PARK BENJAMIN.

AN AUTUMN SONG.

Now gently falls the fading light,
  The autumn's sunset veil,
While dusky grows the wavering flight
  Of whippoorwill and quail.
The grain is bound, the nuts are brown
  On every wooded hill.
The light is softened on the down,
  And silvered on the rill.

The partridge drums; the plover's call
  Salutes the sportsman's ear,
And just above the waterfall
  The fisher sets his weir.
The reddened leaves with withered wings
  Sweep lightly to the sod,
And Autumn walks the land and sings,
  With rustling sandals shod.

ELISHA NORMAN GUNNISON.
In the Century Magazine.

ARCTURUS IN OCTOBER.

"Our star looks through the storm."

STAR of resplendent front! thy glorious eye
Shines on me still from out yon clouded sky,
Shines on me through the horrors of a night
More drear than ever fell o'er day so bright,
Shines till the envious Serpent slinks away
And pales and trembles at thy steadfast ray.

Hast thou not stooped from heaven, fair star, to be
So near me in this hour of agony?
So near — so bright — so glorious, that I seem
To lie entranced as in some wondrous dream —
All earthly joys forgot — all earthly fear
Purged in the light of thy resplendent sphere:
Gazing upon thee, till thy flaming eye
Dilates and kindles through the stormy sky;
While, in its depths withdrawn, far, far away,
I see the dawn of a diviner day.

MRS. SARAH HELEN [POWER] WHITMAN.

OCTOBER'S SONG.

"O DEEP brown eyes," sang gay October,
"Deep brown eyes running over with glee;
Blue eyes are pale, and grey eyes are sober;
Bonnie brown eyes are the eyes for me.

"Black eyes shine in the glowing summer
  With red of rose and yellow of corn;
But cold they close when the still late comer,
  Silvery frost, creeps over the morn.

"Blue eyes shimmer with angel glances,
  Like spring violets over the lea,
But O my grapes, my wines, and my dances;
  What have angels in common with me?

"Go, Grey Eyes! What know ye of laughing,
  Giddy with glee from the mere sunshine?
Go to your books! What know ye of quaffing
  Luscious juice from the riotous vine?

"All the earth is full of frolicking;
  Growing is over, harvest is done,
All the trees are ready for rolicking,
  Glowing scarlet with rustical fun.

"Stay, Brown Eyes, in the purple weather,
  A crown of oak leaves with maple blent
Shall deck your brow, while gayly together
  We two will wander to heart's content."

Thus October's wild voice was singing,
  While on his pipe he cunningly played;
All the red woods with music were ringing,
  And Brown Eyes listened with footsteps stayed,

Waited to hear the song beguiling,
  Listened and laughed through the sunny day;
And earth and sky fell to merry smiling,
  As hand in hand they wandered away.

CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.

IN OCTOBER.

THIS broad wood, in whose blighted ways,
  Along damp sward, I stroll and muse,
To winds of rapid vigor sways,
  One halcyon entanglement of hues!

Yet I can never walk an hour
  Where all these hollow grandeurs gleam,
And watch the land's great passion-flower
  Of beauteous anguish, but I dream

How lofty lives have played their parts,
  Feigning in splendor false content;
How gorgeous robes o'er broken hearts
  Have made despair magnificent.

Or how, at Borgia feasts, long since,
  Where lavish pomp spread costly signs,
Death, the dark slave of priest and prince,
  Waited in those voluptuous wines!

EDGAR FAWCETT.
Four Days.

IN OCTOBER.

In falling leaves
The autumn grieves
The losses of her garnered sheaves;
Her birds are fled,
Her flowers are dead,
And she will not be comforted.

A truant breeze
Among the trees
Is singing in sad minor keys
A low refrain,
Like fitful rain
On lonesome days against the pane.

I climb the hill,
Where all is still
Save one low-laughing little rill,
And 'neath my feet,
In measures sweet
I hear the heart of Nature beat.

Among dead fern
The sumachs burn
Their ruddy bonfires, as I turn
From leaf-strewn ways
Of summer days
To paths that lose themselves in haze.

. . . . .

Now all things keep
A quiet deep
As if the world were wooing sleep;
Peace everywhere,
In earth and air,
Like silence following after prayer.

A day for dreams
By leaf-strewn streams
This fragment of late autumn seems;
The hush is here
Of nightfall near;
This is the twilight of the year.

The sky to me
Is like a sea,
Girt round by shores of mystery;
Each cloud a boat,
To set afloat,
Freighted with dreams, for ports remote.

I watch each sail
Grow faint and pale,
Blown seaward by a silent gale,
Till fading quite
Upon my sight,
They drift into the Infinite.

So, on the sea
Of mystery
That we have named Eternity,
I shall go out
Past fear and doubt,
To find the shores I dream about.

Grant favoring gales
May fill the sails,
And bear to lands where peace prevails.
How far away
They seem, to-day,
And yet, who knows how near are they?

Then thought comes back
Along the track
Of pleasant hours, to what we lack:
The joys that died
In summertide,
Whose graves are scattered far and wide.

Of what we miss,
And not what is,
The heart will think on days like this,
And eyes grow wet
With life's regret
For something it can not forget.

To listening pines,
Whose sombre lines
The lazy sky beyond defines
In sharp relief,
Earth tells her grief, —
The passing glory of the leaf.

O earth! O heart!
How like thou art.
Thy glories and thy joys depart,
And for the fled,
The dear, the dead,
Thou mournest, all uncomforted.

Ah, put away
Such thoughts to-day,
And brood no longer on decay.
Let faith take wing
And soar and sing
Of what shall be in days of spring!

EBEN EUGENE REXFORD.

THE ROSE IN OCTOBER.

O LATE and sweet, too sweet, too late!
What nightingale will sing to thee?
The empty nest, the shivering tree,
The dead leaves by the garden gate,
And cawing crows for thee will wait,
O sweet and late!

Where wert thou when the soft June nights
Were faint with perfume, glad with song?
Where wert thou when the days were long
And steeped in summer's young delights?
What hopest thou now but checks and slights,
Brief days, lone nights?

Stay! there's a gleam of winter wheat
Far on the hill; down in the woods
A very heaven of stillness broods;
And through the mellow sun's noon heat,
Lo, tender pulses round thee beat,
O late and sweet!

MARY TOWNLEY.

AUTUMN.

In Breeze.

How fast she drops her blazing leaves in mirth!
Hark! how she laughs to see them heap the earth;
To see the happy children gather them,
As though each color were a precious gem.

In Calm.

How slow and stately doth her leafage fall!
Dethroned, she holds her royalty through all,
Reluctant still to let her glories down
As is a monarch parting with his crown.

CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES.

OCTOBER.

Upon the dreamy upland aureoled,
  I saw the sombre artist, autumn, stand,
  Ghostlike against the dim and shadowy land,
Limning the hills with purple and with gold;
And while I gazed a mighty mist uprolled,
  As at the touch of some enchanter's wand,
  And all the woods by sudden winds were fanned,
And darkness fell upon the amber wold.
Out of the frosty north, like Indian arrows,
  In never faltering flight the wild ducks flew;
And from the windy fields the summer sparrows
  Reluctantly their feathery tribes withdrew;
As from the heart the hopes of manhood fly,
When the sad winter of old age draws nigh.

James Newton Matthews.

OCTOBER.

From working her green miracles,
  Among the leaves and in the grass,
  Summer has gone, alas! alas!
In every wind her requiem swells;
  The fountain's stony lip is dry,
  And all the overarching sky
  Is sombre as a smoky glass.

Her bridegroom sun, erewhile so brave,
  Alone in his high chamber grieves;
  The trees shake down their pleasant leaves,
And stand, bareheaded, at her grave.
  The misty waves, in silver calms,
  Lie like a flock of sleepy lambs;
  Busy the black-browed spider weaves;

The clouds, like bars of dull, dry sand
  From which the liquid blue has fled,
  Darken the east, and rusty red
Gathers about the sunset land.
  No mother bird is heard to call
  Her downy nestlings, now, and all
  The flowery folk have gone to bed.

The light strikes faint at noontide's hour
  Against the low, grey stubble-tracts,
  Leaned to the hills' long, dusky backs;
The cornfields, like a golden shower,
  Rustle and patter; the rough burr
  Has broken faith to the grasshopper;
  And all the scene its glory lacks.

Summer has gone, — her brief life spent;
  Alas! no longer might she stay,
  And I, alas! can only say
My peace went with her when she went:
  I had my flower, as she her flowers,
  And now must while the weary hours
  With dole as tender as I may.

ALICE CARY.
A Lover's Diary.

AUTUMN.

THE days of gold have come upon the hills,
And dreamy sunshine all the brown earth fills,
With plumes of scarlet nodding 'mong the pines,
And trees of crimson burning 'long the lines
  Of woods whose fields so green and quiet run,
  And catch the mellow light of hazy sun,
  And speak of clover mown, and labor done.

. . . . . .

J. HAZARD HARTZELL.

AUTUMNAL CALM.

CALM is the morn without a sound,
  Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
  And only through the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground :

Calm and deep peace on this high wold
  And on these dews that drench the furze,
  And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold :

Calm and still light on yon great plain
  That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
  And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main.

ALFRED TENNYSON.
In Memoriam.

AUTUMN.

So now, then, summer's over,— by degrees.
  Hark! 'tis the wind in yon red region grieves.
    Who says the world grows better, growing old?
See! what poor trumpery on those pauper trees,
  That cannot keep, for all their fine gold leaves,
    Their last bird from the cold.

This is dame Nature, puckered, pinched, and sour,
  Of all the charms her poets praised bereft,
    Scowling and scolding (only hear her, there!)
Like that old spiteful Queen, in her last hour,
  Whom Spenser, Shakespeare, sung to,— nothing left
    But wrinkles and red hair!

EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON BULWER-LYTTON.

THE LAST HAREBELL.

PLUCK the harebell, fading fast,
  Little one!
Pluck it, for it blooms the last;
  Summer's done.

For the harebell comes in June,
  Bright and blue,
Lasts until October's noon, —
  Blooms for you.

So love, darling, for my sake,
Sweet harebell,
Drooping fair on stony brake,
Hill or dell.

Graceful harebell, lovely flower,
Though we part,
Come again in summer's hour,
Cheer my heart!

ELAINE GOODALE.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of autumn's being,
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill;
Wild Spirit which are moving everywhere,
Destroyer and preserver, hear, O hear!

. . . . . .

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
  What if my leaves are falling like its own?
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
  Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
  My spirit. Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
  Like withered leaves, to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
  Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
  Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy. O wind,
If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE SUNSET OF THE YEAR.

PALE in her fading bowers the Summer stands,
Like a new Niobe with claspèd hands,
Mute o'er the faded flowers, her children lost,
Slain by the arrows of the early frost!
The clouded heaven above is pale and grey,
  The misty earth below is wan and drear,
The baying winds chase all the leaves away,
  As cruel hounds pursue the trembling deer;
It is a solemn time, the sunset of the year!

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

Ode.

OCTOBER DAYS.

PUSH back the curtains and fling wide the door;
  Shut not away the light nor the sweet air,
Let chequered sunbeams play upon the floor,
  And on my head low-bowed, and on my hair.

Would I could sing in words of melody,
  The hazy sweetness of this wondrous time!
Low would I pitch my voice: the song should be
  A soft low chant, set to a dreamy rhyme.

No loud, high notes for tender days like these.
  No trumpet tones, no swelling words of pride,
Beneath these skies, so like dim summer seas,
  Where hazy ships of cloud at anchor ride.

At peace are earth and sky, while softly fall
  The brown leaves at my feet. A holy palm
Rests in a benediction over all.
  O silent peace! O days of silent calm!

And passion, like the winds, lies hushed and still;
  A throng of gentle thoughts, sweet, calm and pure,
Knock at my door and lightly cross the sill.
  Would that their feet might stay, their reign endure!

But storms will come. The haze upon the hills
  Will yield to blinding gusts of sleet and snow
And, for this peace that all my being fills,
  The tides of battle shall surge to and fro.

MRS. ELLEN [PALMER] ALLERTON.

OCTOBER.

ONCE the year was gay and bright,
  Now the sky is grey and sober;
But not the less thy milder light
  I love, thou sere and brown October.
Then across each ferny down
  Marched proud flush of purple heather;
Now in robe of modest brown
  Heath and fern lie down together.

. . . . . .

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

IN LATE OCTOBER.

THE rustling cornfields, crisped and brown,
Are trailing all their banners down.

The vagrant geese with clanging flight
Go piping southward in the night.

Nest songs beneath the eaves are dead,
Though no one knew when swallows fled.

. . . . .

RICHARD GEAR HOBBS.

OCTOBER.

O THE misty bright October!
  Misty bright on the brown hillside;
Setters hunt the stubble over,
Scream the crake and the golden plover,
  Through the moorland waste and wide.

O the golden-crowned October!
  Golden, gorgeous in decay;
Through the woods the leaves forever
Fall, and in the sluggish river,
  Yellow and brown, they drift away.

O the chill and pale October!
  Colder winds are whirling now;
All the champaign wide they deaden,
Will not suffer the leaves to redden,—
  Hanging lone on the wintry bough.

O the merry and glad October!
  Heap the hearth with loads of fuel,
Blaze away both log and splinter:
Hail to the coming of healthful winter,
  Hail to the festive joys of Yule!

MORTIMER COLLINS.

IN OCTOBER.

I SAW the sunlight glinting down,
Where the tall trees stood gaunt and brown.

I saw the soft pathetic light
Touch the stream's foam to glistening white.

I saw the tearful lustre shed,
Where falling leaves heaped gold and red.

I heard the music that they make,—
The becks that brattle through the brake,

And toss the withered fern-fronds by,
And laugh beneath the sombre sky.

I heard the river's ceaseless song,
Sweeping fir-crested hills among.

The chirpings of each lingering bird
That braves the angry north, I heard.

And a fresh yearning woke and cried,
A voice of Love unsatisfied;

And all the lovely autumn day,
In burning tears seemed blurred away.

To wood and glen, to hill and plain,
For Nature's balm I asked, in vain.

Then I said, low and suddenly,
"God keep my darling safe for me."

MRS. SUSAN KELLY [HOLDSWORTH] PHILLIPS.

OCTOBER.

BESIDE the meadow bars the lowing cows
  Gather at fall of eve, with frosty breath.
The gold of autumn gilds the autumn boughs.
  How sweetly charmed is summer to her death!

The chilly wind sighs round the naked thorn;
  The dainty flowers have perished on the glade;
The eastern star, at close of even born,
  Shines cold through dewy night's returning shade.

But when from morning's gates, at purple day,
  The smiling spirit of the light returns,
And over towering pines the sunbeams play,
  As broad and bright the day's great censer burns,

O then there is a glory in the air,
  Such as the pride of summer never gave.
A gladdening presence lingers everywhere,
  That brightens beauty's pathway to the grave.

ERNEST WARBURTON SHURTLEFF.

SONG.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours,
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers:
  To himself he talks;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh
  In the walks;
  Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks
Of the moldering flowers:
  Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
    Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;
  Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
    Heavily hangs the tigerlily.

The air is damp and hushed and close,
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose
  An hour before death;
My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves
At the moist sick smell of the rotting leaves,
  And the breath
  Of the fading edges of box beneath,
And the year's last rose.
  Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
    Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;
  Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
    Heavily hangs the tigerlily.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

DAYS AND VOICES.

SWIFT the elm tree's leaves are falling;
Plaintively the peewee calling
Mingles with the leaves his notes;
And the ghost of summer floats
Through the air.

Like the leaves, the days long vanished,
Mixed with voices dead or banished,
Come to me with those sweet notes.
But the ghost of gladness floats
Through despair.

GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

OCTOBER DAYS.

THE maples in the forest glow;
On the lawn the fall flowers blaze;
The landscape has a purple haze:
My heart is filled with warmth and glow.

Like living coals the red leaves burn;
They fall, — then turns the red to rust;
They crumble, like the coals, to dust;
Warm heart, must thou to ashes turn?

SYLVESTER BAXTER.

AUTUMN.

THE air is chill with winter's rimy breath,
  Birds silent cower apart on shriveled spray,
  Darkness invades the azure realms of day,
All life seems over-blowing into death.
Yet on the wall the plum grows dark and mellow,
  On orchard paths red apples patter down,
  The chestnut in the dank wood gathers brown,
And on the hill the stooks gleam golden-yellow.
Autumn once more has crowned the vading year
  With fulness, and in joy brings home her sheaves,
  Nor for the buried blooms of summer grieves,
But I — with whom, too, life is in the sear —
  Can I rejoice, — springtime and summer gone,
  And on my barren boughs but withered leaves alone?

JOSEPH NOEL PATON.

BEFORE THE HUSH OF STORM.

BEFORE the hush of storm,
While yet the long bright afternoons are warm,
Under the stainless arch of azure sky
  The air is filled with gathering wings for flight;
  Yet with the shrill mirth and the loud delight,
Comes the foreboding sorrow of this cry, —
"*Till the storm scatter, and the gloom dispel,*
Farewell, farewell, farewell!"

Why will ye go so soon,
In these soft hours, this sweeter month than June?
The liquid air floats over field and tree,
A veil of dreams, — where do ye find the sting?
A gold enchantment sleeps upon the sea
And purpled hills, — why have ye taken wing?
But faint, far-heard, the answers fall and swell, —
"*Farewell, farewell, farewell!*"

CHARLES GEORGE DOUGLAS ROBERTS.

OCTOBER.

AY, thou art welcome, heaven's delicious breath,
When woods begin to wear the crimson leaf,
And suns grow meek, and the meek suns grow brief,
And the year smiles as it draws near its death.
Wind of the sunny south, O still delay
In the gay woods and in the golden air,
Like to a good old age released from care,
Journeying, in long serenity, away.
In such a bright, late quiet, would that I
Might wear out life like thee, mid bowers and brooks,
And, dearer yet, the sunshine of kind looks,
And music of kind voices ever nigh;
And when my last sand twinkled in the glass,
Pass silently from men, as thou dost pass.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

AUTUMN.

THERE is a fearful spirit busy now:
  Already have the elements unfurled
  Their banners: the great sea wave is upcurled:
The cloud comes: the fierce winds begin to blow
About, and blindly on their errands go,
  And quickly will the pale red leaves be hurled
  From their dry boughs, and all the forest world,
Stripped of its pride, be like a desert show.
I love that moaning music which I hear
  In the bleak gusts of autumn, for the soul
Seems gathering tidings from another sphere;
  And, in sublime mysterious sympathy,
  Man's bounding spirit ebbs and swells more high,
Accordant to the billow's loftier roll.

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER.

DECAY.

O LUSTRE of decay!
  The daylight glides away
In glow of richer glory than at noon;
  Autumn, that steals the flower,
  Gives the tree golden dower,
And crimsons walls that will be leafless soon.

O dimness of decay!
The sunset hastes away,
And leaves the world to lone and darkling night,
And autumn, when he flies,
Leaves only howling skies,
And trees that toss their naked boughs in fright.

FRANCIS WILLIAM BOURDILLON.

IN OCTOBER.

IT was on Saturday eve, in the gorgeous bright October,
Then when brackens are changed and heather blooms are faded,
And amid russet of heather and fern green trees are bonnie;
Alders are green, and oaks; the rowan scarlet and yellow;
One great glory of broad gold pieces appears the aspen,
And the jewels of gold that were hung in the hair of the birch tree,
Pendulous, here and there, her coronet, necklace and earrings,
Cover her now, o'er and o'er; she is weary and scatters them from her.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.
The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich.

OCTOBER.

O'er hill and field October's glories fade;
  O'er hill and field the blackbirds southward fly;
The brown leaves rustle down the forest glade,
Where naked branches make a fitful shade,
  And the last blooms of autumn withered lie.

The berries on the hedgerow ripen well,
  Holly and cedar, burning bush and brier;
The partridge drums in some half-hidden dell,
Where all the ground is gemmed with leaves that fell,
  Last storm, from the tall maple's crown of fire.

The chirp of crickets and the hum of bees
  Come faintly up from marsh and meadow land,
Where reeds and rushes whisper in the breeze,
And sunbeams slant between the moss-grown trees,
  Green on the grass and golden on the sand.

From many a tree whose tangled boughs are bare
  Lean the rich clusters of the clambering vine;
October's mellow hazes dim the air
Upon the uplands, and the valley where
  The distant steeples of the village shine.

Adown the brook the dead leaves whirling go;
  Above the brook the scarlet sumachs burn;
The lonely heron sounds his note of woe
In gloomy forest-swamps where rankly grow
  The crimson cardinal and feathery fern.

Autumn is sad: a cold, blue horizon
  Darkly encircles chequered fields and farms,
Where late the gold of ripening harvests shone,
  And autumn moans the loss of summer's charms.

. . . . . .

GEORGE ARNOLD.

IN AUTUMN.

'TIS autumn, and my steps have led me far
  To a wild hill that overlooks a land
Wide-spread and beautiful. A single star
  Sparkles new-set in heaven. O'er its bright sand
The streamlet slides with mellow tones away;
  The west is crimson with retiring day,
And the north gleams with its own native light.
  Below, in autumn green, the meadows lie,
  And through green banks the river wanders by,
And the wide woods with autumn hues are bright:
  Bright — but of fading brightness — soon is past
That dream-like glory of the painted wood;
  And pitiless decay o'ertakes, as fast,
The pride of men, the beauteous, great and good.

JOHN HOWARD BRYANT.

THE LAST FLOWERS.

Dost thou remember that autumnal day
  When by the Seekonk's lonely wave we stood,
And marked the languor of repose that lay,
  Softer than sleep, on valley, wave and wood?

A trance of holy sadness seemed to lull
  The charmèd earth and circumambient air,
And the low murmur of the leaves seemed full
  Of a resigned and passionless despair.

Though the warm breath of summer lingered still
  In the lone paths where late her footsteps past,
The pallid starflowers on the purple hill
  Sighed dreamily, "We are the last! the last!"

I stood beside thee, and a dream of Heaven
  About me like a golden halo fell.
Then the bright veil of phantasy was riven,
  And my lips murmured, "Fare thee well!—fare-
    well!"

I dared not listen to thy words, nor turn
  To meet the mystic language of thine eyes,
I only felt their power, and in the urn
  Of memory, treasured their sweet rhapsodies.

We parted then, forever, and the hours
  Of that bright day were gathered to the past,
But, through long, wintry nights, I heard the flowers
  Sigh dreamily, "*We are the last! — the last!*"

MRS. SARAH HELEN [POWER] WHITMAN.

AUTUMN.

THE world puts on its robes of glory now;
  The very flowers are tinged with deeper dyes;
The waves are bluer, and the angels pitch
  Their shining tents along the sunset skies.

The distant hills are crowned with purple mist;
  The days are mellow, and the long, calm nights,
To wondering eyes like weird magicians show
  The shifting splendors of the Northern Lights.

The generous earth spreads out her fruitful store,
  And all the fields are decked with ripened sheaves;
While in the woods at autumn's rustling step,
  The maples blush through all their trembling leaves.

ALBERT LAIGHTON.

AUTUMN.

THE sobbing winds, with fitful swell and fall,
  The solemn wood, whose foliage hath been kissed
  By the frost's gelid lips, the gathered mist
Scudding athwart the sky, and over all
A sombre veil that seems a floating pall,
  Dim-seen, yet palpable, beneath whose shade
  Earth's greenness withers and her bright flowers
    fade,—
These speak of thee, O autumn! Thou dost call
  Thy ministers around thee, and in scorn
  Of summer's beauty, all of summer born —
Leaves, flowers, and fruits—are scattered on thy blast.
  Yet art thou welcome with thy frown severe,
  Thou bounteous "almoner of the dying year!"
For thou its treasures in earth's lap dost cast.

WILLIAM HENRY BURLEIGH.

AUTUMN LANDSCAPE.

OCTOBER skies are misty, cool and grey,
  The stubbles emptied of their latest sheaf,
  The meadow of its mounds; a noble grief
Has beautified the woods in their decay;
  How many colors on the falling leaf
Encurtaining our solemn hills to-day,
  Whose afternoon is hushed and weary brief!
Only a robin sings from any spray.

And night sends up her pale cold moon and spills
White mist around the hollows of the hills,
  Phantoms of firth or lake; the peasant sees
  His cot and stockyard, with the homestead trees,
In-islanded; but no vain terror thrills
  His perfect harvesting; he sleeps at ease.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

THE LAST OF THE ROSES.

A ROYAL rose! a rose how darkly red.
  A proud, voluptuous, fullblown flower, that sways
  Her sceptre o'er the wind-swept garden ways,
With mantling cheek and bold, imperious head.
Alone she lifts above yon desolate bed
  A beauty past all terms of raptured praise,
  The statelier that she rules in autumn days,
When every rival flower is dimmed or dead.
A haughty Cleopatra! there she smiles,
  Unwitting that her sovereign love is lost,—
  Her Antony, a gorgeous sunflower bloom.
Ah, vain henceforth her beauty and sweet wiles.
  Queen, art thou blind? Thy lord hath met his doom;
  His Actium came with winter's vanguard, — Frost!

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

OCTOBER.

O Love, turn from the unchanging sea, and gaze
Down these grey slopes upon the year grown old,
A-dying 'mid the autumn-scented haze,
That hangeth o'er the hollow in the wold,
Where the wind-bitten ancient elms infold
Grey church, long barn, orchard, and red-roofed stead,
Wrought in dead days for men a long while dead.

Come down, O love; may not our hands still meet,
Since still we live to-day, forgetting June,
Forgetting May, deeming October sweet:
O hearken, hearken! through the afternoon,
The grey tower sings a strange old tinkling tune!
Sweet, sweet, and sad, the toiling year's last breath,
Too satiate of life to strive with death.

And we too, — will it not be soft and kind,
That rest from life, from patience and from pain,
That rest from bliss we know not when we find,
That rest from Love which ne'er the end can gain?
Hark, how the tune swells, that erewhile did wane!
Look up, love! ah, cling close and never move!
How can I have enough of life and love?

William Morris.
The Earthly Paradise.

AUTUMN FIRES.

In the other gardens
  And all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
  See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over
  And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
  The grey smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!
  Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
  Fires in the fall!

Robert Louis Stevenson.
A Child's Garden of Verses.

AUTUMN.

Autumn is near to her death.
All through the night may be felt her languidly scented breath
Coming and going in gasps, long drawn mid the shivering trees,
Out on the misty moors, and down by the dew-drenched leas.

Her face grows pallid and grey,
The healthy flush of her prime is solemnly fading away,
And her sunken cheeks are streaked with a feverish hectic red,
As she gathers the fallen leaves and piles them about her bed.

Her bosom is rifled and bare,
Gone is the grain and the fruit, and the flowers out of her hair,
Whilst her faded garment of green is blown about in the lane,
And the glance of her lover, the sun, is coldly turned on her pain.

She lies forlorn and alone;
The little chorusing birds have a wailing, unhappy tone,
As they fly in a crowd to the hedge, when the evening mists arise,
To curtain the bed of death and shadow the closing eyes.

But to-night the silent cloud,
Dropping great tears of rain, will come and make her a shroud,
Winding it this way and that, tenderly round and round,
Then catch her away in its arms from the damp unwholesome ground.

All her labor is done:
Perfected, finished, complete, 'neath the wind and the rain and the sun;
All the earth is enriched, the garners of men run o'er,
There is food for man and beast, and the stranger that begs at the door.

Swiftly approaches the night;
Whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with all thy might:
Labor right on to the end; let thy works go forth abroad;
Turn thy face to the sky, and enter the joy of thy Lord.

ALFRED NORRIS.

TO A CUCKOO IN AUTUMN.

O SADLY sung, or sadly heard,
How came into thy throat,
O cuckoo blithe, thou vernal bird,
That melancholy note?

The fields are fading with the year,
An autumn sadness fills
The pallid pastures far and near,
And weighs upon the hills.

With faded leaves upon the breeze
  That wanton hiccup goes,
And where amid dismantling trees
  The swollen river flows.

O cuckoo, timeless in thy glee,
  Thou hast undone thy power
For me, by singing joyfully
  In this ungenial hour.

Fond creature, if thou couldst but know
  The charm thou dost destroy!
May nothing in the world below
  Belong alone to joy?

Sad voice, so blithe when heaven and earth
  Are meeting in the spring,
Did we not know before that mirth
  May be a mournful thing?

THOMAS BURBIDGE.

THE HUSKERS.

IT was late in mild October, and the long autumnal rain
Had left the summer harvestfields all green with grass again;
The first sharp frosts had fallen, leaving all the woodlands gay
With the hues of summer's rainbow, or the meadow-flowers of May.

Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the sun rose
broad and red,
At first a rayless disk of fire, he brightened as he
sped;
Yet, even his noontide glory fell chastened and
subdued,
On the cornfields and the orchards, and softly pic-
tured wood.

And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping to the
night,
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with yellow
light;
Slanting through the painted beeches, he glorified
the hill;
And, beneath it, pond and meadow lay brighter,
greener still.

. . . . . .

From spire and barn looked westerly the patient
weathercocks;
But even the birches on the hill stood motionless as
rocks.
No sound was in the woodlands, save the squirrel's
dropping shell,
And the yellow leaves among the boughs, low rust-
ling as they fell.

The summer grains were harvested; the stubble-
fields lay dry,
Where June winds rolled, in light and shade, the
pale green waves of rye;

But still, on gentle hillslopes, in valleys fringed with wood,
Ungathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy corn-crop stood.

Bent low, by autumn's wind and rain, through husks that, dry and sere,
Unfolded from their ripened charge, shone out the yellow ear;
Beneath, the turnip lay concealed, in many a verdant fold,
And glistened in the slanting light the pumpkin's sphere of gold.

There wrought the busy harvesters; and many a creaking wain
Bore slowly to the long barn floor its load of husk and grain;
Till broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank down, at last,
And, like a merry guest's farewell, the day in brightness passed.

And lo! as through the western pines, on meadow, stream and pond,
Flamed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire beyond,
Slowly o'er the eastern seabluffs a milder glory shone,
And the sunset and the moonrise were mingled into one.

As thus into the quiet night the twilight lapsed
away,
And deeper in the brightening moon the tranquil
shadows lay;
From many a brown old farmhouse, and hamlet
without name,
Their milking and their home-tasks done, the merry
huskers came.

Swung o'er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchforks
in the mow,
Shone dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant
scene below;
The growing pile of husks behind, the golden ears
before,
And laughing eyes and busy hands and brown
cheeks glimmering o'er.

Half-hidden in a quiet nook, serene of look and
heart,
Talking their old times over, the old men sat apart;
While, up and down the unhusked pile, or nestling
in its shade,
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout, the happy
children played.

Urged by the good host's daughter, a maiden young
and fair,
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and pride of soft
brown hair,

The master of the village school, sleek of hair and
smooth of tongue,
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a husking-
ballad sung.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

UNSEASONABLE SNOWS.

THE leaves have not yet gone; then why do ye
come,
O white flakes falling from a dusky cloud?
But yesterday my garden-plot was proud
With uncut sheaves of ripe chrysanthemum.
Some trees the winds have stripped; but look on
some,
'Neath double load of snow and foliage bowed,
Unnatural winter fashioning a shroud
For autumn's burial ere its pulse be numb.
Yet Nature plays not an inhuman part:
In her, our own vicissitudes we trace.
Do we not cling to our accustomed place,
Though journeying Death have beckoned us to start?
And faded smiles oft linger in the face,
While grief's first flakes fall silent on the heart!

ALFRED AUSTIN.

AUTUMN IN TUSCANY.

THESE autumn winds are growing chill,
They wander wailing o'er the hill,
And at the close-shut window cry
That summer opened lovingly;
But we can let them in no more,
And all the eve my heart is sore,
My heart is sore, I know not why.
They seem to say,
The summer day
Has past away,
And life goes with it silently.

Still o'er the mountain's darkening bar
We watch the newborn evening star,
That throbs and quivers in the sea
Of amber light,— and musingly
We let our shaping fancy play
With those soft clouds of pearly grey,
That float along the silvery sky.
Ah woe! ah woe!
We all must go,
The chill winds blow,
And summer's gone like a passing sigh.

These autumn morns when we may stray
Through chestnut woods, where glancing play
The chequered light and shadow thrown
O'er trunk, and grass, and mossy stone,
And lie beneath some spreading tree
And feel our own felicity,
How sweet if they would never fly,—
But no! ah no!
'Tis never so!
All good things go,
And thought pursues them with a sigh.

All day the woods are redolent
And saddened with the steamy scent
The dewy rotting leaves exhale
That heap the hollows in the vale;
Then through the bonfire's quivering gas,
The landscape shakes as it would pass,
And all is sad, we know not why;
All seems to say
The summer day
Is past away,
Why linger ye to say goodbye?

No more the fierce cicala shrills,
Only the hearthstone-cricket trills;
The hempstalks pile their bleaching bones
In pyramids of skeletons,
Or clacking cradles break them where
The peasant shakes their silvery hair,

And flings them on the grass to dry.
The summer's flown,
The leaves are strewn,
And we alone
Are lingering here to say goodbye.

The cyclamen, alive with fears,
Smooths trembling back its harelike ears;
The frost-touched creepers bleeding fall,
And drip in crimson o'er the wall;
The rusted chestnuts shivering spill
Their bursting spine-burrs on the hill;
The day is short, soon comes the night,
And damp and chill
Along the hill
The dews distil
Under the harvest moon's great light.

Louder at eve the river roars;
The fringed acacia paves with showers
Of golden leaves our summer path,
And all the world about us hath
A feel of sorrow,— we must go;
Alas! I would not have it so,
But all things vanish from us here,
And still we sigh,
But why, ah why,
So swiftly fly,
Ye days that were so glad and dear?

'Tis lovely still; but yet a sense
Of sadness and impermanence
Disturbs me,— and this flushing grace
That mantles over autumn's face
Is but the hectic hue, beneath
Whose beauty steals the thought of death,
And this it is that makes us sigh.
Ah! bitter word
Too often heard,
What thoughts are stirred
Whene'er we whisper thee,— goodbye?

. . . . . .

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY.

AN AUTUMN SCENE.

THE dead leaves fall like noiseless rain,
The air is calm and warm and sweet;
Upon the woodland and the plain
The ghost of summer rests her feet.

A languid fountain sends its spray
Into a basin, green with moss;
Slim water-spiders pass in play
Where flickering sunbeams dance across.

A spirit broods o'er all unseen,
And soon will chill with icy breath.
The peace, so restful and serene,
Is but the calm that comes with death.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

AUTUMNTIME.

I SING the mellowed autumntime;
The russet pears, the scarlet haws, the yellow sheaves of autumntime.

The fading, falling autumntime;
The rustling leaves, the saddened winds, the pallid mists of autumntime.

The scented, fragrant autumntime;
The clover balls, the moorland heath, the fresh-plowed earth of autumntime.

The sober, tranquil autumntime;
The chastened noons, the steadfast stars, the purple glooms of autumntime.

The sweet, soft sounds of autumntime;
The twittering birds, the bleating flocks, the plaining streams of autumntime.

The resting, patient autumntime;
The close-reaped fields, the dew-drenched grass, the low-streaked skies of autumntime.

The grand, prophetic autumntime;
For ripened hearts and sweetened souls called home to God at autumntime.

WILLIAM COX BENNETT.

IN AUTUMNTIDE.

THE wind, whose tender whisper in the May
  Set all the young blooms listening through the grove,
Sits rustling in the faded boughs to-day
  And makes his cold and unsuccessful love.

The rose has taken off her tire of red,
  The mulleinstalk its yellow stars has lost,
And the proud meadowpink hangs down her head
  Against earth's chilly bosom, witched with frost.

The robin that was busy all the June,
  Before the sun had kissed the topmost bough,
Catching our hearts up in his golden tune,
  Has given place to the brown cricket now.

The very cock crows lonesomely at morn,
  Each flag and fern the shrinking stream divides,
Uneasy cattle low, and lambs forlorn
  Creep to their strawy sheds with nettled sides.

ALICE CARY.
Autumn.

THE POTATO HARVEST.

A HIGH bare field, brown from the plow, and borne
  Aslant from sunset; amber wastes of sky
  Washing the ridge; a clamor of crows that fly
In from the wide flats where the spent tides mourn
To yon their rocking roosts in pines wind-torn;
  A line of grey snake-fence, that zigzags by
  A pond and cattle; from the homestead nigh
The long deep summonings of the supper-horn.
Black on the ridge, against that lonely flush,
  A cart, and stoop-necked oxen; ranged beside,
    Some barrels, and the dayworn harvestfolk,
Here emptying their baskets, jar the hush
  With hollow thunders; down the dusk hillside
    Lumbers the wain; — and day fades out like smoke.

CHARLES GEORGE DOUGLAS ROBERTS.

ONLY A LEAF.

IT was only a little leaf,
  That hung for a while on its bough:
It danced and fluttered, but life was brief,
  And its place is vacant now.

It was only a little leaf,
  Did it pay to live at all?
The sun smiled on it, the cold rains came,
  And then it was doomed to fall.

It was only a little leaf;
  But on it did shine the sun,
The winds did caress, the birds did sing,
  And it lived till its work was done.

It was only a little leaf;
  But it took its gladsome part
In the great earth's life; and, at the last,
  Earth clasped it to her heart.

MINOT JUDSON SAVAGE.

AUTUMN.

THINE, autumn, is unwelcome lore,
To tell the world its pomp is o'er.

To whisper in the rose's ear
That all her beauty is no more;

And bid her own the faith how vain,
Which spring to her so lately swore.

A queen deposed, she quits her state;
The nightingales her fall deplore.

The hundred-voicèd bird may woo
The thousand-leavèd flower no more.

The jasmine sinks its head in shame,
The sharp east wind its tresses tore,

And robbed in passing cruelly
The tulip of the crown it wore.

The lily's sword is broken now,
That was so bright and keen before;

And not a blast can blow, but strews
With leaf of gold the earth's dank floor,

The piping winds sing Nature's dirge,
As through the forest bleak they roar,

Whose leafy screen, like locks of eld,
Each day shows scantier than before.

Thou fadest as a flower, O man!
Of food for musing here is store.

O man, thou fallest as a leaf!
Pace thoughtfully earth's leafstrewn floor;

Welcome the sadness of the time,
And lay to heart this natural lore.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.

AUTUMN DAYS.

RED springs the rye
  As autumn days decline,
And from the brilliant sky
  Less florid splendors shine.
  In airy lustrous line
The gossamer displays,
  And faintly breathes the pine
In autumn days.

And solemn is the hush
  That on the heart doth fall;
And of all birds the thrush
  Alone is musical.
  The sparrow on the wall
Shivers in pallid rays,
  And the frog has ceased its call
In autumn days.

. . . .

WILLIAM HOWITT.

PARTRIDGES.

UNDER the alders, along the brooks,
  Under the hemlocks, along the hill,
Spreading their plumage with furtive looks,
  Daintily pecking the leaves at will;
Whirr! and they flit from the startled sight, —
  And the forest is silent, the air is still.

Crushing the leaves 'neath our careless feet,
  Snapping the twigs with a heavy tread,
Dreamy October is late and sweet,
  And stooping we gather a blossom dead;
Boom! and our heart has a thunderous beat
  As the grey apparition flits overhead.

Up from the path with a thunderous roar
  That startles the dreamer amid his dreams,
Till he peers into vistas that open before
  For the flash of the plumage with silver gleams:
Why, modest brown hermit, thus fearful of him
  Who would share in the secrets of forest and streams?

I lie on windrows of leaves and gaze
  At thy innocent preening of serrate wing,
Or watch where the last crimson colors blaze,
  And the red autumn leaves to the maple cling,
Too fond of this life myself, to destroy
  The motion and life I am worshiping.

ALONZO TEALL WORDEN.

THE APPROACH OF COLD WEATHER.

One morn, what time the sickle 'gan to play,
  The eastern gates of heaven were open laid,
  When forth the rosy Hours did lead a maid,
From her sweet eyes who shed a softened ray.
  Blushing and fair she was; and from the braid
Of her gold locks she shook forth perfumes gay:
  Yet languid looked and indolently strayed
Awhile, to watch the harvest borne away.
But now, with sinews braced, and aspect hale,
  With buskined legs and quiver 'cross her flung;
With hounds and horn, she seeks the wood and vale,
  And Echo listens to her forest song.
At eve she flies to hear the poet's tale,
  And Autumn's name resounds his shades among.

Samuel Egerton Brydges.

FROST.

Behold where walks the whitehaired beldame, Frost,
Breathing her bitterness o'er all the scene, —
She whom erewhile we hailed as maiden Dew.
The flowers she fed, when morning glories blew
Their white and purple trumpets to the dawn,
Are nipped and withered by her fingers cold;
The grass is crisp and brittle 'neath her tread;
And like a witch she flies the broad clear sun,
But works her charm beneath the gibbous moon.

Thomas Buchanan Read.
The New Pastoral.

ERE WINTER COME.

THERE is a sweetness in autumnal days,
Which many a lip doth praise;
When the earth, tired a little and grown mute
Of song, and having borne its fruit,
Rests for a little space ere winter come.
It is not sad to turn the face towards home,
Even though it shows the journey nearly done;
It is not sad to mark the westering sun,
Even though we know the night doth come.

LEWIS MORRIS.
The Ode of Life.

AFTERMATH.

WHEN the summer fields are mown,
When the birds are fledged and flown,
  And the dry leaves strew the path;
With the falling of the snow,
With the cawing of the crow,
Once again the fields we mow
  And gather in the aftermath.

Not the sweet, new grass with flowers
Is this harvesting of ours;
  Not the upland clover bloom;
But the rowen mixed with weeds,
Tangled tufts from marsh and meads,
Where the poppy drops its seeds
  In the silence and the gloom.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

UNTO LATE AUTUMNTIDE.

WITH lurid torch October fired the woods;
Brief grew the days, and long and chill the nights;
The birds flew southward and their songs made glad
No more the hours. Then changed the maple's gold
To russet brown. November's step was heard
Along the leafstrewn ways, and, blown by winds
And drenched by autumn rains, October fled
Before her down the path where summer went:
So waned the year to later autumntide.

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